DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 289 593 PS 017 023

TITLE	A Guide for Education Coordinators in Head Start.
INSTITUTION	Creative Associates, Inc., Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY	Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (DHHS), Washington, DC. Head Start Bureau.
REPORT NO	DHHS-OHDS-86-31536; ISBN-1-55672-010-6
PUB DATE	Aug 86
CONTRACT	105-85-1522
NOTE	187p.; For related resource materials, see PS 017 024; for the Spanish version of the guide, see PS 017 025.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC08 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Administrator Role; Early Childhood Education; Parent Participation; Personnel Evaluation; *Program Administration; Program Evaluation; *Program Implementation; Staff Development; Teacher Supervision
IDENTIFIERS	*Project Head Start

ABSTRACT

This guide addresses the roles and responsibilities of education coordinators in Head Start programs. The guide covers the key roles of the coordinator: (1) leading the education component of the program; (2) planning, implementing, administering, and monitoring the educational services; (3) supervising staff; (4) training staff and parents; and (5) evaluating the program. With the exception of the first chapter, which is an overview of Head Start and the education component, each of the eight chapters begins with a statement of the responsibilities of the coordinator, a list of activities to perform and documents to review before reading the chapter, and a self-assessment. Narrative discussions of concepts and strategies related to fulfilling relevent responsibilities follow. Each chapter concludes with a topical bibliography of annotated resources. (PCB)

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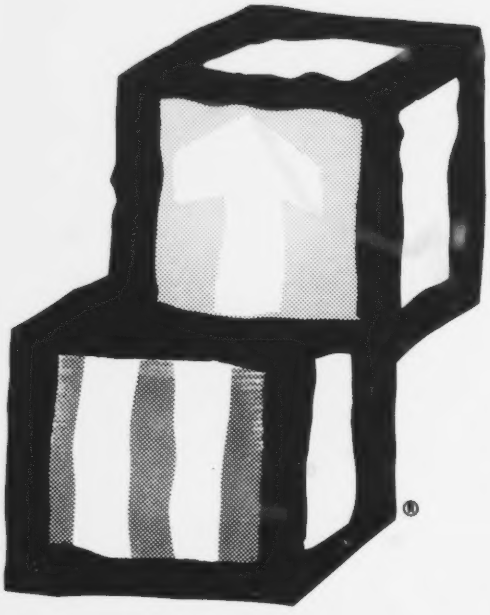
A Guide for Education Coordinators in Head Start

PS 017023



A GUIDE FOR

EDUCATION COORDINATORS

IN HEAD START

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Human Development Services
Administration for Children, Youth and Families
Head Start Bureau
Education Services Branch

This Guide was developed as a part of
Contract #105-85-1522
from the Head Start Bureau,
Administration for Children, Youth and Families,
Office of Human Development Services,
United States Department of Health and Human Services

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August 1986

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FOREWORD

The Administration for Children, Youth and Families is pleased to make available this *Guide for Education Coordinators in Head Start*. The *Guide* is part of ACYF's commitment to enhance the quality of educational services in Head Start programs. In order to address the diverse needs of the Head Start community, the *Guide* is available in both English and Spanish. A flexible set of resource papers encourages programs to adapt and add to the information provided. Videotapes on curriculum and on individualizing instruction also have been developed. The videotapes highlight key issues addressed in the *Guide* and can be used for training and to orient staff and the community about the educational philosophy and approach of the Head Start program.

The *Guide* has been extensively reviewed by experts in early childhood education, by ACYF staff, and by Education Coordinators who field tested and validated its contents. We hope you will find it a useful resource for improving your Education Component.

Dodie Livingston
Commissioner, ACYF

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of *A Guide for Education Coordinators in Head Start* involved several groups of individuals who participated at various stages of the project. We are deeply appreciative of the time and assistance they so generously gave to the project.

The ACYF National and Regional Staff, especially Dr. Soledad Arenas, the Project Officer, provided support and direction throughout the project; Clennie Murphy, Dr. Pamela Coughlin, Richard Johnson, Douglas Klafehn, Dollie Wolverton, Dr. Mary Lewis, and Martella Pollard, all commented on drafts of the *Guide*.

The Panel of Experts met twice in Washington, D.C., extensively critiqued two drafts of the *Guide*, and provided guidance and direction.

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A **Design Team** met with Creative Associates' staff on several occasions to react to content outlines and to brainstorm ideas. Several members assisted in drafting and reviewing sections of the *Guide*.

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The Validators, seventeen Education Coordinators in Region III, donated their time to attend a two-day orientation, used the *Guide* and *Resource Papers* in their work for two months, and provided us with feedback and comments.

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Education Coordinators across the country attended workshops on the *Guide* at NAEYC and the National Head Start Conference, responded to our phone calls, and validated the content and need for *A Guide for Education Coordinators in Head Start*.

INTRODUCTION

The Education Component is the largest and most complex of all components in the Head Start Program. The ongoing, daily contact that the education staff has with children and parents puts the Education Component at the hub of program activities that address not only the child's cognitive development but also physical, emotional, and social development. What takes place every day in the centers and in the child's home affects every component and the services it provides. Through daily interactions, the education staff can develop and nurture in parents a sense of trust and shared responsibility for achieving program goals.

As the Performance Standards state, the overall goal of the Head Start Program is to bring about a greater degree of social competence in the children of low-income families. Under the supervision of the Head Start Director, the Education Coordinator has the primary responsibility for ensuring that the following Performance Standards' objectives are achieved:

(a) *Provide children with a learning environment and the varied experiences which will help them develop socially, intellectually, physically, and emotionally in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development toward the ultimate goal of social competence.*

(b) *Integrate the educational aspects of the various Head Start components in the daily program of activities.*

(c) *Involve parents in educational activities of the program to enhance their role as the principal influence on the child's education and development.*

(d) *Assist parents to increase knowledge, understanding, skills, and experience in child growth and development.*

(e) *Identify and reinforce experiences which occur in the home that parents can utilize as educational activities for their children.*

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of this guide is to provide a resource for new and experienced Education Coordinators as they work to achieve the objectives of the Education Component. It addresses the roles and responsibilities of Education Coordinators who supervise education staff in planning, implementing, and evaluating educational services in Head Start programs. It can also serve as a training document for Education Coordinators in large grantees who supervise other Education Coordinators. The *Guide* explains how to comply with the Performance Standards and provides good practices and procedures for implementing the education program. The *Guide* draws from both a research and field-based assessment of the responsibilities of Education Coordinators, emphasizes the interrelationship of the Education Component with other program components, and offers strategies for carrying out responsibilities efficiently and effectively.

FEATURES OF THE GUIDE

The *Guide* has several features that contribute to its usefulness. First, it is **comprehensive**. Because it is intended for both new and experienced Education Coordinators, the *Guide* includes strategies not only for building new leadership capabilities but also for enhancing existing ones. It emphasizes resource development and directs the reader to materials where further information on particular topics can be found. It can be read cover to cover or used selectively as a resource.

Second, the *Guide* is **practical**. Because the content of the *Guide* is based on research, expert opinion, and interviews with a large and varied sample of Head Start Education Coordinators, it provides realistic strategies for performing key tasks and relates theories and concepts to everyday operations.

Finally, the *Guide* is **adaptable**. Readers are encouraged to select those parts that are relevant to their needs, their interests, and their program. Narrative discussions in the text are supported by a second volume of resources in loose-leaf format to enable Education Coordinators to add materials from their own program and other resources they have found useful.

UNDERLYING THEMES

There are several themes that permeate the Head Start Program; these are integrated throughout the *Guide*. The first important theme is that the **Performance Standards are the requirements** of the program. They set the standards for the services to be provided and should be used as a continuous reference by Education Coordinators in planning, implementing, and evaluating the component.

Collaboration is the key to a successful Head Start program. Head Start is comprehensive by design and requires input from a variety of people. Education Coordinators must work with the Head Start Director, parents, staff, component coordinators, and community members to achieve the goal of developing the whole child.

The third underlying theme is Head Start's requirement to **individualize the program**. This means tailoring the program to build on the unique strengths and interests of each person and to meet individual needs. It applies to the children, the staff, and the parents.

Closely related to both a collaborative spirit and the need for individualization is Head Start's commitment to **participatory management**. During every stage, programs are required to involve parents, staff, and the community in major program decisions. This participation is required to ensure that the program always reflects not only the ideas of the administrators and staff but also the needs, concerns, and ideas of the parents and the community.

The last recurring theme is the **partnership with parents**. Head Start is based on the premise that parents are a child's most important teachers, particularly during the preschool years. Parents should therefore receive support and guidance in helping their children develop at home and should also have input into the program that is being provided. With parent involvement, the program not only is more relevant to the children and their families but also builds parent skills and self-confidence and instills in them a belief that they can have an effect on their lives and their environment.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This *Guide* is meant to be used in conjunction with the Head Start Performance Standards, policy manuals, and other documents published by the Administration for Children, Youth and Families (ACYF) and each local program. Education Coordinators should make sure they have copies of all program requirements and familiarize themselves with these documents. In particular, Education Coordinators who supervise the home-based option might wish to read *A Guide to Operating a Home-Based Child Development Program*. Although many topics discussed in *A Guide for Education Coordinators in Head Start* are relevant to the home-based option, it primarily addresses the tasks and responsibilities involved in overseeing the center-based option. However, Education Coordinators are responsible for quality control of Education Component services regardless of the program option used to deliver Head Start services.

The eight chapters of the *Guide* discuss the key roles of the Education Coordinator: leading the Education Component; planning, implementing, administering, and monitoring the educational services; supervising staff; training staff and parents; and evaluating the educational program.

With the exception of the first chapter, each chapter begins with an overview of the responsibilities of the Education Coordinator in that role, a list of activities to perform and documents to review before reading the chapter, and a self-assessment. These documents include Head Start requirements and local program manuals. Narrative discussions of concepts and strategies related to performing relevant responsibilities follow. Each chapter concludes with a topical bibliography of annotated resources. In addition, Education Coordinators are encouraged to contact their regional offices for a list of available resources.

The *Guide* is accompanied by a set of *Resource Papers*. These papers include checklists, sample forms, short articles, and other materials that can be adapted to meet the needs of the local program.

THE HEAD START DICTIONARY

ACYF—Administration for Children, Youth and Families. The branch of the Department of Health and Human Services that administers Head Start and other programs concerned with children and families (formerly known as Office of Child Development).

Board of Directors. The group of people that has the legal responsibility of setting the purpose and policies of an organization. Refers to either grantee or delegate agencies.

CAA—Community Action Agency. An organization, either public or private nonprofit, which is funded to administer and coordinate on a community-wide basis, a variety of antipoverty programs (formerly funded by OEO or CSA).

CDA—Child Development Associate Program. An individualized, competency-based assessment and credentialing program for early childhood staff. Credentials are granted to candidates who demonstrate competencies in six competency goals and thirteen related functional areas. Training is also provided to improve staff performance in these areas and to help staff attain the CDA credential.

Center Committee. A committee composed of *all* parents who have children enrolled in a particular Head Start center.

CNA—Community Needs Assessment. A survey in which data are gathered on the specific needs of the low-income families in the community and the resources available to meet them.

Community Representative. Any member of a Policy Council or Committee who is not a parent of a currently enrolled child, e.g., past parents, agency representatives, etc.

Delegate Agency. An agency to which responsibility is delegated by the grantee for the operation of a total Head Start program or a significant portion.

DHHS—Department of Health and Human Services. The federal agency responsible for all federal programs dealing with health and welfare.

Education Advisory Committee. A group of parents, staff, and community representatives who review the activities of the Education Component and provide suggestions and support.

Grantee. A public or private agency that receives funds directly from ACYF to operate a Head Start program.

Home-Based. A Head Start program option that focuses on parents as educators and includes regular home visits by an assigned home visitor who works with families and supports parents in meeting the needs of their young children.

Home Visitor. The primary contact with families in the home-based program option. The home visitor works with parents to enhance their capabilities as educators of their children. He/she assists parents in identifying their children's strengths and needs, shares information, discusses parent concerns, and plans and carries out small and large group activities for children and parents.

IEP—Individual Education Plan. An individualized plan of providing services to Head Start children with special needs. Each plan is based on a needs assessment and developed by the Coordinator of Handicapped Services in cooperation with the child's parents, health professionals, and Head Start staff.

OHDS—Office of Human Development Services. The office in the Department of Health and Human Services responsible for the Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

PC—Policy Council. A council set up at the grantee level. At least 50 percent of the members must be parents of Head Start children currently enrolled in the grantee Head Start program. It may also include representatives of the community. Where the grantee delegates the Head Start Program to various agencies (delegate agencies), each delegate agency has a Policy Committee and representatives from each Policy Committee help to make up the Policy Council.

Performance Standards. The Head Start program functions, activities, and facilities required to meet the objectives and goals of the Head Start program.

PIR—Program Information Report. The form that provides quantitative information on key characteristics of each Head Start program, and is completed once a year.

PL 94-142. The Education of All Handicapped Children Act, which provides for a free, appropriate public education for children with handicaps from age 3 through 21. It sets procedures for serving the children and for involving the parents in planning their child's special education services. (Reauthorized under P.L. 98-199.)

Policy Committee. A committee set up at the delegate agency level when the program is administered in whole or in part by such an agency. At least 50 percent of the membership of the committee must be parents of children enrolled in that delegate agency program. It may also include representatives from the community.

PYE—Program Year End Date. The date that a grantee's current Head Start grant expires.

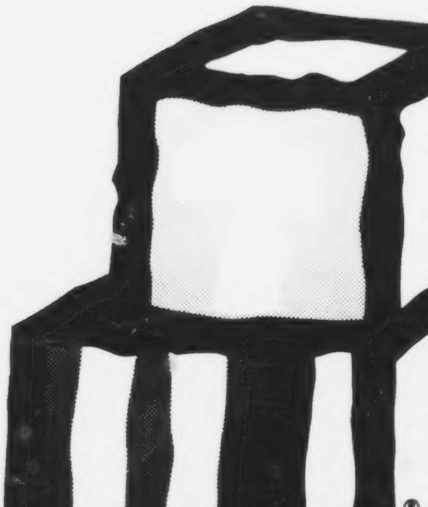
RAP—Resource Access Project. A training and technical assistance network that provides Head Start programs with training and resources for working with handicapped children.

SAVI—Self-Assessment/Validation Instrument. The instrument used by many grantees and delegates to conduct the annual self-assessment.

Self-Assessment. The process whereby the staff, parents, and community of a local Head Start program assess their total program's compliance with the Performance Standards.

70.2. The parent involvement policy that became an integral part of the Head Start Performance Standards in 1975.

I. An Overview of Head Start and the Education Component



I. AN OVERVIEW OF HEAD START AND THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

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OVERVIEW[1]

Head Start was launched by the federal government in 1965 to help young children from low-income families get a better start in life. Head Start was designed to support the role of parents and to provide their children, primarily three to five years old, with a full program of educational, health, nutrition, and social services to meet their needs and enrich their lives. The Head Start population reflects the rich cultural diversity of our society.

The overall goal of the Head Start program is to engender a greater degree of social competence in children of low-income families by strengthening their ability to cope with school and the world around them and helping to create new opportunities for them and their families.

From the beginning, Head Start was designed to be more than an educational program. Although Head Start children benefit from a variety of learning experiences that help lay the groundwork for success in elementary school, they receive much more:

- Hot meals each day to help meet their daily nutritional needs.
- Comprehensive health care—including physical and dental examinations, immunizations, and follow-up on identified health problems.
- Mental health services to foster their emotional growth and help them deal with special problems.
- Social activities to help them learn to get along with others and gain self-confidence.

Because parents are the most important influence on a child's development, Head Start places heavy emphasis on involving parents in all phases of the program. Head Start parents serve on Policy Councils and Committees and are active in local Head Start programs. Many serve as paid or volunteer assistants in the classrooms.

WHAT MAKES HEAD START UNIQUE

COMPREHENSIVE

Head Start is unique. No other program for young children is as comprehensive or reaches into so many areas of the child's life. Head Start is based on the philosophy that to be effective, a preschool program should address children's needs in *all* areas of development—physical, social, emotional, and cognitive—and provide support and assistance to all those who affect the child's development. Head Start's four program components—Education, Parent Involvement, Health, and Social Services—reflect this philosophy.

Head Start's **Education Component** is designed to meet the individual needs of children and the educational priorities of the community. Regardless of cultural background or special needs, every child is offered a variety of learning experiences designed to foster physical, social, emotional, and cognitive growth and to develop an appreciation for ethnic, cultural, and linguistic diversity. Children participate in indoor and outdoor activities and are introduced to new concepts. They also are encouraged to express their feelings and to develop self-confidence and the ability to get along with others.

The **Parent Involvement Component** ensures that parents, regarded as the most important influence on their children's development, are involved in program planning and operations and in parent education. Parents serve on Head Start's Policy Councils and Committees where they have an opportunity to make decisions about the program. Parents also work as classroom volunteers or paid staff. Through involvement in the classroom, participation in courses and workshops on child development, and interaction with staff in the home, parents learn about educational activities that can be used at home. In addition, staff learn from parents about the children's needs and interests.

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[1] Adapted from *Serving the Nation's Children and Families* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Human Development Services, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, n.d.).

The **Health Component** provides children with a comprehensive health services program—that includes medical, dental, mental health, and nutritional services. Children receive a complete physical exam, including vision and hearing tests, immunizations, and a dental exam. Handicapping conditions are also identified and addressed. Follow-up treatment, dental care, and psychological services are provided as needed. Children at centers are given nutritionally balanced meals that fulfill one-third to two-thirds of their daily requirements. Nutrition education is provided to children, staff, and parents.

Finally, Head Start's **Social Services Component** assists the family in its own efforts to improve the condition and quality of family life. Serving as advocates, the staff identifies the social service needs of Head Start families and either meets these needs or works with other community agencies to ensure these needs are met. The staff informs parents of community resources and services and facilitates their use.

INTERRELATED

A second unique aspect of the Head Start program design is its integrated, interdisciplinary nature. The Head Start Performance Standards state that the activities of all components should be integrated. The program is structured so that services in one component complement and reinforce those in other components. For example, Section 1304.2-1 of the Education Component of the Performance Standards states this objective:

> *Involve parents in educational activities of the program to enhance their role as the principal influence on the child's education and development.*

Section 1304.5-1 of the Parent Involvement Component of the Performance Standards states this objective:

> *Provide a planned program of experiences and activities which support and enhance the parents' role as the principal influence in their child's education and development.*

Similar cross-referencing appears throughout the Performance Standards. Head Start is designed so that staff members in all four components work together to provide a cohesive, comprehensive program.

ADAPTABLE

In every local program, an effort is made to adapt activities to the individual requirements and needs of each child. As part of this effort, many Head Start centers have adapted their programs to meet the needs of special groups of children and families.

Children who have **physical or emotional handicaps** are placed with nonhandicapped children in Head Start classrooms and participate in most daily activities, so that they can learn in the least restrictive environment. Ten percent of the enrollment opportunities in each Head Start program must be made available to children with professionally diagnosed handicaps.

Children who enter Head Start with **limited English-speaking ability** participate in programs where adults can communicate in both English and their primary language and where their cultural heritage is emphasized. Head Start has pioneered the development of bilingual-multicultural curricula for preschool children and new methods of training teachers to work with bilingual children.

MAJOR PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

There are currently several major improvement efforts being implemented that directly affect the Education Component: The Child Development Associate (CDA) program; Services to the Handicapped; Bilingual/Multicultural Education; and the Home-based Option. Each of these is discussed below.

THE CHILD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE (CDA) PROGRAM[2]

The Child Development Associate (CDA) National Credentialing Program is a major national effort initiated in 1971 to improve the quality of child care by improving, evaluating, and recognizing the competence of child care providers and home visitors. The CDA Competency Standards, which define the skills needed by providers in specific child-care settings, are the foundation of the three-part CDA approach:

- Training
- Assessment
- Credentialing

Training based on the CDA Competency Standards is conducted by colleges and universities across the country and by many day care programs, independent consultants, and Head Start centers. Funding and administration of these programs is independent of the CDA National Credentialing Program. Although many caregivers want to pursue training specifically geared to the CDA Competency Standards, CDA training is not a requirement for assessment.

Assessment and credentialing of child care providers is administered by the CDA National Credentialing Program in Washington, D.C., under the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, a subsidiary of the National Association for the Education of Young Children. As of 1985, more than 17,000 child care providers had earned the CDA Credential, and more than half of the states have incorporated the Credential in child care licensing requirements.

The CDA Competency Standards serve as a means of measuring the performance of caregivers during the field-based CDA assessment. Assessment is available to caregivers working in several settings—center-based programs serving infants, toddlers, and preschool children; family day care programs; and home visitor programs. An optional bilingual specialization is available to candidates working in bilingual programs. A CDA Credential is awarded to a person who demonstrates competence in caring for young children by successfully completing the CDA assessment process. *Resource Papers* I-1 illustrates CDA assessment options.

THE CDA COMPETENCY STANDARDS

Although their content differs, the CDA Competency Standards for all settings have the same structure. The Competency Standards are divided into six competency goals, which are goal statements for caregiver behavior. The competency goals are common to all child care settings. They require a candidate to demonstrate the ability to:

- establish and maintain a safe, healthy learning environment;
- advance physical and intellectual competence;
- support social and emotional development and provide positive guidance;
- establish positive and productive relationships with families;
- ensure a well-run purposeful program responsive to participant needs; and
- maintain a commitment to professionalism.

The six goals are defined in more detail in thirteen functional areas, which describe the major tasks a caregiver must complete in order to attain the competency goal. Each functional area is explained by a developmental context, which presents a brief overview of relevant child development principles. (See *Resource Papers* I-2-4 for center-based and home-based competency goals and functional areas.)

Although the six competency goals are the same for all settings (center-based, family day care, home visitor), the functional area definitions and sample behaviors change to define the particular skills needed for the specific child care setting and/or age group. These functional area definitions are specified in CDA credentialing publications. (See the resource list at the end of this chapter.)

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[2] Adapted from *Child Development Assessment System and Competency Standards, Preschool Caregivers in Center-Based Programs* (Washington, DC: Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, 1986), pp.1-3.

SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

Head Start's open enrollment policy and emphasis on the individual has always specified that services be available to all eligible children. The program goals in the Performance Standards document this commitment to serving all children, particularly those of low-income families. In 1974, as part of the Head Start legislation, Congress mandated that a 10 percent minimum of Head Start enrollment be allotted to children with professionally diagnosed handicaps, and that services be provided to meet their special needs. Subsequent legislation (PL 95-568) extended this national mandate to 10 percent of Head Start enrollment in each state.

Head Start meets these legislative mandates by integrating children with handicapping conditions into the ongoing daily activities to the extent possible. In "mainstreaming," as the process is called, children with special needs are given an opportunity to learn, play, and interact with peers. Mainstreaming helps all children develop healthy attitudes and perceptions about people with special needs.

THE PROCESS FOR MEETING THE NEEDS OF CHILDREN WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

The Community Needs Assessment and recruitment activities identify some children with handicapping conditions who are then referred to the Head Start program. The screening process required for all Head Start children also identifies those who may be experiencing motor, cognitive, language, social, or emotional problems caused by a handicap. All children with evident or suspected handicaps are referred to an appropriate professional for evaluation and diagnosis. Parents are informed and involved at every stage in the process.

Children with handicaps receive not only the full range of services provided to all Head Start children, but also any special education and related services they may need, such as physical therapy. The regular program is augmented or modified to meet their individual needs, and an Individual Education Plan is developed.

A successful program for handicapped children requires close coordination across all components, with the Education Coordinator playing an important part in supervising the developmental observations and participating in the preparation and implementation of the Individual Education Plans. The Education Coordinator works with the person designated to coordinate services to handicapped children in planning activities specific enough to meet the children's needs and in arranging for staff training to help teachers individualize more effectively.

The majority of Head Start programs report that the special help provided by their staff is augmented by help from other agencies and organizations. In addition, a network of Resource Access Projects (RAPs) is available to assist grantees in locating and providing specialized services and staff training. RAPs conduct needs assessments for all programs, identify resources, and provide materials and technical assistance.

BILINGUAL/MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The Head Start Performance Standards specify that the program's curriculum must reflect the culture and language of the population served. As an educational alternative for children whose primary language is not English and who have limited English proficiency, Head Start's bilingual/multicultural initiative represents one way to tailor the services to the needs of a particular community and its population. This initiative originally was designed to meet the needs of Hispanic children with limited English proficiency who came to Head Start with their own set of values, socialization patterns, and learning styles. It has since been expanded to include other ethnic groups that exist in our nation today.

There is no bilingual/multicultural program approach that is best. Cultural and linguistic differences within ethnic groups and the presence of several ethnic groups within a particular community make it necessary to tailor each program. Although programs may vary, experts in bilingual/bicultural or multicultural early childhood development agree that all effective programs:

- use a sound bilingual/multicultural, developmental curriculum that reflects the language and culture of the children being served;
- build on the strengths that the bilingual/bicultural child brings to the learning environment;
- continue the development of the child's first language while facilitating acquisition of the second; and
- provide an environment in which children can develop to their maximum potential.

Although local communities make decisions on whether to implement a bilingual/multicultural program, it is recommended that a bilingual approach be used whenever at least 25 percent of the children speak a language other than English. In programs where only one or two children do not use English as their primary language, it is recommended that a staff member or volunteer who speaks the child's language be present during the child's first weeks in the program. In programs where children speak many different languages and come from a variety of cultural backgrounds, a multicultural rather than a bilingual approach is recommended.

In an effort to assist Head Start programs to meet the special needs of bilingual children, ACYF funded the development of four bilingual/multicultural curriculum models. (Descriptions of these models appear in the Resource section of Chapter III.) A number of Head Start programs across the country are implementing them, and their staff has been trained to provide training to neighboring grantees who wish to implement a bilingual/multicultural approach.

THE HOME-BASED OPTION

The home-based option is one of several variations of the standard Head Start model that can be considered for use by local grantees. As the name implies, this option focuses on the home rather than on the classroom as the central learning facility. Head Start grantees that select the home-based option must adhere to the same policies and offer the same range of comprehensive services offered by center-based programs.

A second feature that distinguishes the home-based option is its focus on working with the parent in the home. In the home-based option, parents are the primary recipients of Head Start services, provided by home visitors who travel to each parent's home. All activities—child development, health, nutrition, and social services—are designed to help the parent develop the skill to continue or expand the activity independently. Needs assessments are conducted to determine the specific needs of each family and to develop long- and short-range goals for each family member.

The primary link between the parents and the local grantee is the home visitor, who makes regular visits to the child's home. Using the results of a family needs assessment as a guide, home visitors work with other component staff to plan ways of providing services. Home visitors share information, resources, and strategies to enhance parenting skills; assist the parents in planning activities for the following week; and discuss parental concerns about health, social services, and the child's behavior.

Home visitors also work with other Head Start staff to organize regular group experiences for children. These group experiences must be planned for intervals of one a week to one a month.

The home-based option also offers group experiences for parents to help them feel part of the program. Home visitors organize informal events, such as morning coffee meetings or evenings of conversation at someone's home. Parents are also encouraged to be involved in the decision-making Policy Council/Committee, in-service training sessions, and adult basic education courses.

Programs may elect to develop and incorporate a home-based option. Consideration should be based on the needs of the children and the community and the capabilities and resources of the program staff. Readers providing services in home-based settings should refer to *A Guide for Operating a Home-Based Child Development Program*, available from the Head Start National Office.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Although programs vary, the Education Coordinator, under the supervision of the Head Start Director, is responsible for all aspects of the Education Component program requirements in all program options. Working cooperatively with other component coordinators, the Education Coordinator is responsible for ensuring that children are provided with the learning environment and the opportunities that will help them develop physically, socially, cognitively, and emotionally, and that parents are supported in their role as the child's primary teachers.

Responsibilities of Education Coordinators in Head Start differ depending on the size of the program, the program options selected, community needs, and other responsibilities a coordinator may be asked to assume.

However, it is possible to identify a core of responsibilities common to all Education Coordinators. These core responsibilities form the chapters of this *Guide* and are summarized below.

LEADING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

As the standard-bearer and the resident expert both on the Performance Standards for the component and on early childhood education and child development, the Education Coordinator provides guidance, support, and suggestions to the education staff. The Education Coordinator works closely with other component coordinators to provide comprehensive services and is an advocate for quality programs for children and families.

PLANNING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

Working cooperatively with parents and staff, the Education Coordinator organizes the development and annual review of the Education Component Plan. The Education Coordinator ensures that everyone involved understands the Performance Standards and the procedures for developing a sound education plan.

IMPLEMENTING THE PROGRAM

Implementing the education program means ensuring that the staff knows how to actualize the Education Plan by individualizing the program, creating a learning environment, implementing the curriculum, managing the classroom, overseeing delivery of education services by home visitors, preparing weekly plans, and involving parents in the program.

ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAM

This involves working with the Director to implement the policies and procedures that will facilitate the implementation of the Education Plan and keep activities on course. Administrative duties include keeping records, establishing procedures for special situations, overseeing facilities, and tracking all activities in the Education Component.

SUPERVISING

Most Education Coordinators supervise a larger staff than any other component coordinator. Because staff needs are so varied, an individualized approach to supervision is most useful. Responsibilities include providing ongoing support and feedback to the staff, building morale, and acting as a resource and problem solver as well as conducting scheduled performance appraisals.

TRAINING PARENTS AND STAFF

Education Coordinators participate in the development of the Program Training Plan, which is based on staff, parent, and program needs and the training requirements in the Performance Standards. Education Coordinators ensure that training is implemented and evaluated for education staff and parents.

EVALUATING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

Head Start has a built-in evaluation system, the annual self-assessment. The Education Coordinator participates in the evaluation process with the Policy Council to determine whether the Education Component complies with the Performance Standards. Further, the Education Coordinator may implement local evaluation efforts, such as questionnaires for parents and staff to determine how well the program meets its goals.

RESOURCES

Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project. *Head Start Is Working*. Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Lincoln Center, Merritt Hill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. $75.00.

This 11-minute slide/tape presentation provides an overview of the Head Start program. It is intended for general audiences, but is particularly appropriate for staff, parents, and community organizations.

Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project. *Head Start Bureau Tapes*. Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Lincoln Center, Merritt Hill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. $39.50 per set.

These five audio tapes are a series of interviews with National Office Head Start Bureau Coordinators. The interviews range in length from 10 to 30 minutes and address the following topics: CDA Programs; Bilingual-Bicultural Programming; Health and Mental Health; Social Services; Eligibility and Enrollment; Parent Involvement; Dental Health and EPSDT; Handicap Services; Nutrition; Home-Based Option; and Administrative Regulations.

Child Development Associate Program, National Credentialing Program. *Child Development Associate System and Competency Standards Series* (Family Day Care Providers, Home Visitors, Preschool Caregivers in Center-Based Programs, Infant/Toddler Caregivers in Center-Based Programs) Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition, 1341 G Street, N.W., Suite 802, Washington, DC 20005. 1986. Free.

These booklets present overviews of the CDA National Credentialing Program and the Competency Standards assessment system for home visitors, preschool caregivers in center-based programs, infant/toddler caregivers in center-based programs, and family day-care providers.

Hymes, James L., Jr. *Early Childhood Education, the Year in Review*. Carmel, CA: Hacienda Press, 1971-1984. Consult local libraries for availability.

Each year since 1971, James Hymes has prepared a report on the happenings in early childhood education during the previous year. Each report covers early childhood education news in areas such as state and national politics, Head Start, research findings, day care, CDA, academia, and more.

Institute for Child Study. *Head Start Information Series*. Institute for Child Study, College of Education, University of Maryland, College Park, MD 20742. $36 per 30-minute 3/4" cassette; $29 per 30-minute VHS tape.

Produced and distributed cooperatively by the Institute for Child Study and ACYF, this series of 12 videotapes was developed to keep Head Start administrators abreast of the latest developments in the program. Each tape is related to one or more of the Head Start components. Some cover new information or revised guidelines; others are summaries of existing information with new ideas for program implementation. Information is valuable for use in training staff, parents, and the local community.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *A Review of Head Start Research Since 1970*. Head Start Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013. 1983. DHHS Publication No. (OHDS) 83-31185. Stock No. 017-092-00092-8.

This is a review of research on the impact of Head Start that took place from 1970 to 1982. This volume also contains an annotated bibliography of Head Start research since 1965.

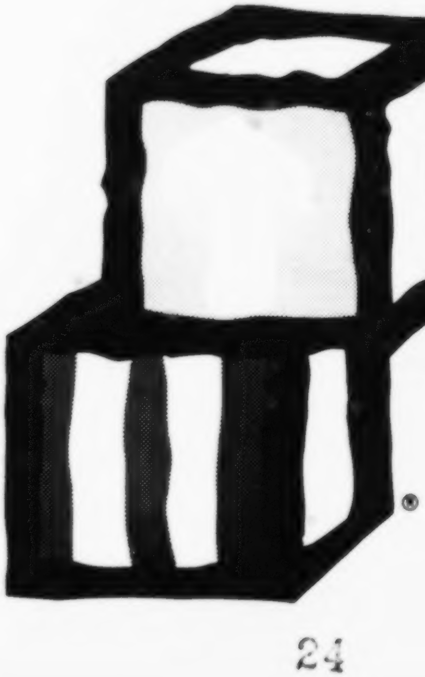
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Status of Handicapped Children in Head Start Programs: Annual Reports of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to the Congress of the United States on Services Provided to Handicapped Children in Head Start.* Head Start Bureau, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013.

This report provides an overview of Head Start policies on services to handicapped children; the numbers, types, and severity of handicaps of children enrolled in Head Start; and the services performed for handicapped children since 1974.

Weikart, et al. *Changed Lives: The Effects of the Perry Preschool Program on Youths Through Age 19.* High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 N. River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48195. 1984. $15.00 (paperback).

This 210-page volume reports on the Perry Preschool longitudinal research study. It presents empirical evidence that preschool education for disadvantaged children translates into significant educational, economic, and social change. *Changed Lives* compares and evaluates the findings of seven early intervention studies, presents case studies of 8 of the 123 youths in the study now over 19 years or age, and gives evidence that disadvantaged children who have been to preschool are more apt to attend college or job training courses, be employed, and support themselves at age 19.

II. The Leadership Role of the Education Coordinator



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- Setting standards for quality and ensuring that these standards are met.
- Serving as a resource to staff and parents on component organization, on the Head Start Performance Standards and other policies that relate to the Education Component, and on early childhood education and development.
- Communicating with staff to share information, build skills, oversee performance, and resolve problems.
- Collaborating with the Director, component coordinators, and supervisors to help ensure that individual component services are integrated into one comprehensive program.
- Using participatory management and consensus building for component decision making.
- Managing time and resources effectively.
- Serving as an advocate for quality programs for children and families.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Review the job descriptions and specifications for the Education Coordinator and other component coordinators.
- Review the Head Start Performance Standards for all Head Start components.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: LEADERSHIP ROLE OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR

INTERACTION WITH OTHERS IN HEAD START

	Yes	Needs My Attention
1. Do I communicate regularly with my Director?	______	______
2. Do I interact on a regular basis with education staff and parent and community volunteers?	______	______
3. When invited, do I attend the Parent Policy Council/ Committee meetings and provide information and support?	______	______
4. Do I work regularly and cooperatively with all component coordinators?	______	______

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR QUALITY

	Yes	Needs My Attention
5. Do I understand and communicate the importance of meeting the requirements of the Head Start Performance Standards?	______	______
6. Do I encourage staff to maintain an environment that is safe, healthy, and conducive to learning?	______	______
7. Do I ensure that our program complies with state and local staffing requirements?	______	______
8. Do I respect and support parents as the prime educators of their children?	______	______

SERVING AS A RESOURCE

	Yes	Needs My Attention
9. Do I regularly review professional publications and attend association meetings to keep abreast of developments in the field?	______	______
10. Do I network with individuals and groups who perform similar tasks to share ideas, information, and experiences?	______	______
11. Do I make regular on-site visits to offer feedback and support to staff and parents?	______	______

	Yes	Needs My Attention
DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT SKILLS		
12. Do I work with the Director, component coordinators, staff, and parents to make major program decisions?	______	______
13. Do I make use of time management strategies?	______	______
14. Do I take care of myself physically and emotionally to be prepared to handle the stress that sometimes arises?	______	______
CHILD ADVOCACY		
15. Do I advocate for quality services for the children and families in the community?	______	______

Review your responses, especially those marked "Needs My Attention," and circle those you want to work on. List them below in order of their importance to you.

____

____

____

LEADERSHIP IN THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

Leadership is the process of guiding or directing a person or group toward the accomplishment of a particular goal. In contributing to the overall goal of bringing about a greater degree of social competence in Head Start children, the Education Component promotes physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development, and supports other components in meeting the physical, social, health, and nutritional needs of children. In the multiple roles of planner, administrator, supervisor, trainer, and evaluator, the Education Coordinator guides staff, parents, and volunteers and is therefore a leader of a large segment of the Head Start program.

Education Coordinators who effectively perform these various roles generally have several leadership qualities. First, they are **collaborators**. The comprehensive nature of Head Start and the integrated approach mandated by the Performance Standards require close cooperation and collaboration with the Director, other component coordinators and supervisors, and the Policy Council/Committee. An effective Education Coordinator understands the roles and responsibilities of the job and appreciates the necessity of interacting with other Head Start staff.

Second, they have both an extensive knowledge of and a **commitment to providing a quality program**. As resident expert on the Head Start Performance Standards, early childhood education, and the growth and development of preschool children, the Education Coordinator guides and directs the education staff and parents in creating an effective learning environment and providing appropriate learning experiences.

Third, Education Coordinators serve as **a resource for the staff**. They stay abreast of developments in the field, meet with other Education Coordinators and early childhood professionals, and stay in touch with staff by making on-site visits.

Effective Education Coordinators also need **management skills**, such as decision making, communication, and time and stress management.

Finally, in maintaining and enhancing the quality of services to children, Education Coordinators are continuous **advocates** for the health, education, and safety of children and families. They support efforts to enhance children's growth in the center, the home, and the community.

This chapter defines the Education Coordinator's leadership responsibilities as collaborator, standard-bearer, resource, manager, and advocate, and discusses how the Education Coordinator works with other Head Start staff in achieving program goals.

INTERACTION WITH OTHERS IN HEAD START

Education Coordinators work with a variety of people and manage a number of tasks. Key interactions are summarized below.

THE HEAD START DIRECTOR

The Head Start Director has full responsibility for planning, directing, and administering the program. The Director is responsible for program planning, development, and management; self evaluation; and ongoing community relations. He/she provides guidance and direction to all component coordinators and has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that program goals and objectives are achieved.

The Education Coordinator communicates regularly with the Director to receive guidance, report progress, plan new strategies, discuss problems, and receive information on program policies and procedures. The Education Coordinator submits information on staff performance, recommends training for staff and parents, and makes recommendations to the Director and Policy Council/Committee on program options, Education Component goals and objectives, and the curriculum.

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THE EDUCATION COMPONENT STAFF

The Education Coordinator supervises the teachers, assistant teachers, and parent and community volunteers who implement the education program. In some programs, the Education Coordinator supervises the Home-based Coordinator and/or the home visitors. Through reviewing records, holding staff meetings and conferences, and making site visits, the Education Coordinator oversees the services that the staff provides and motivates the staff to meet and exceed the Performance Standards. The Education Coordinator provides ideas on how to make the program run smoothly and how to enhance children's development.

Where appropriate, the Education Coordinator also provides assistance in planning learning activities, arranging a stimulating environment, and completing records. The Education Coordinator helps the staff solve problems and develop strategies that benefit the children. The Education Coordinator also interacts with staff during performance appraisals and the development of training plans.

THE POLICY COUNCIL/COMMITTEE

The Policy Council/Committee (PC) is the formal structure by which parents participate as policymakers. At least 50 percent of the PC members must be parents of children presently enrolled. The remaining members are community representatives. Although the Education Coordinator is not a member of the PC, he or she often provides information and guidance by attending meetings when invited.

OTHER COMPONENT COORDINATORS

The Performance Standards require the Education Component to "*integrate the educational aspects of Head Start components into the daily program activities.*" The Education Coordinator works cooperatively with the Parent Involvement, Health, and Social Services Coordinators and the Coordinator of Handicapped Services. Together they work with the Director to implement a comprehensive program for children and their families. Examples of how the Education Component collaborates with other components and with nutrition services are provided in the *Resource Papers* (II-1-4).

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR QUALITY

Leadership in the Education Component means ensuring that staff understands and meets or exceeds the Performance Standards and other measures of quality, such as the Child Development Associate (CDA) competencies. These standards have been developed especially for Head Start, but they also apply to other quality early childhood programs.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has also established standards for its Center Accreditation Program. These are not Head Start requirements, but they are consistent with the Head Start Performance Standards. Both have five elements in common that are considered essential for a quality program: curriculum, the physical environment, staff, parent involvement, and a supportive climate.

THE CURRICULUM

A quality program has a curriculum that promotes the total development of the child. Such a curriculum includes goals and objectives and a variety of developmentally appropriate activities. It also reflects the ages, cultures, and backgrounds of the children enrolled, and presents an unbiased view of the roles of males and females, ethnic groups, and the handicapped in our society.

The curriculum meets the needs of the children, their families, and the community. Regular evaluations assess how effectively the curriculum is meeting program goals and objectives. Methods for observing and recording children's development are also included.

THE ENVIRONMENT

A quality program has an environment that is safe, healthy, and conducive to learning. Centers conform to all appropriate state and local licensing requirements and fire and health ordinances. They also reflect the different developmental stages of children and facilitate optimal growth and development.

Indoor and outdoor equipment is appropriate in size for preschool children and is free of small, detachable parts, sharp points, and edges. Where appropriate, it is firmly anchored. Equipment and materials allow for a balance of child- and teacher-initiated activities, encourage social interaction, and foster social skills, such as sharing, responsibility, and self-reliance.

THE STAFF

The staff in a quality program consists of adults who have received appropriate training, understand child development and early childhood education, and are interested in and knowledgeable about helping children learn. They are in good physical and mental health, have no history of child abuse, and are familiar with first aid procedures.

Staff-child ratio is based on state and local licensing requirements. Most standards specify minimum, maximum, and desirable staffing patterns (e.g., at least one teacher and one assistant teacher for each group of 20 children age four to five, and one teacher and two assistants for every 15 three-year-olds). Adequate supervision, training, and support are provided.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

In a quality program, parents are recognized as the most important influence on their child's growth and development. Parents are well informed about the program and are welcomed as observers and contributors in policy making, program planning, and program evaluation. Positive and productive relationships with families are established so that the program reflects their interests and values and acknowledges their concerns. Parents are kept informed about the program through newsletters, meetings, conferences, and printed announcements.

Parents are supported and respected in their role as their child's primary teacher. They are encouraged to be involved in program planning and implementation. Individual strengths are identified and used whenever possible. In addition, the program provides parents with training and resources to enhance their abilities to perform as educators, decision makers, and planners. A quality program also provides adequate supervision, training, and support in carrying out these responsibilities.

A SUPPORTIVE CLIMATE

A quality program maintains an atmosphere of respect and appreciation for all those involved. Children are respected as individuals with feelings, interests, and concerns. Interaction between children and staff is characterized by warmth, personal respect, individuality, positive support, and responsiveness. Discipline is based on clearly stated rules, positive reinforcement of good behavior, and efforts to redirect disruptive behavior. No physical punishment is allowed.

A supportive climate is evident for staff as well. The program capitalizes on the strengths of each staff person and provides training to increase knowledge and augment skills.

SERVING AS A RESOURCE

Education Coordinators are familiar with the theories and principles of child development, early childhood education, and the Head Start Performance Standards. Because they guide and support the staff and parents in helping children grow and develop, it is important for them to keep up with the field and to participate in self-improvement activities.

A COMMITMENT TO SELF-IMPROVEMENT

The Education Coordinator's commitment to self-improvement is demonstrated by keeping abreast of developments in the field of early childhood education and by becoming involved in networking activities.

To enhance professional growth and development, Education Coordinators may:

- Join professional organizations. These organizations are excellent sources of information about current trends and research in the field and provide a vehicle for meeting others who share similar interests and concerns. (A list of professional journals and organizations appears at the end of this chapter.)
- Make use of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education (through the local library).
- Research the history and culture of the community.
- Visit other programs.
- Serve on task forces in the community.
- Take advantage of continuing education, opportunities for travel, or other "extras" offered by the agency.
- Attend conferences and seminars.
- Enroll in graduate courses.
- Read professional journals as well as popular magazines and share interesting articles with parents and staff.
- Review and recommend new children's books. Include those about children from different cultures, from single parent homes, or with handicaps.

NETWORKING WITH OTHERS

Networking can be an effective strategy for gaining new ideas and a powerful support in coping with the isolation and pressure of the job. It is important for Education Coordinators to allow themselves time to network —to spend time with people who perform similar tasks and to share ideas, information, and experiences.

Networking can be done individually or as part of a group. There are at least three possible types of group networks for Education Coordinators: a network of Education Coordinators working in various Head Start programs; a network of child care professionals in the local community; and a coalition of area human-service providers. Such networks are already established in many parts of the country. Some meet informally, often during lunch, to share information; others have regularly scheduled meetings with speakers and a formal agenda.

New Education Coordinators who are unfamiliar with existing networks may want to explore the various options for joining a support group. The Director or regional office staff may be able to suggest existing networks for Head Start staff. A child care resource and referral service or a local chapter of NAEYC may also be able to identify local networks of child care and human service professionals.

If there are no networks established, consider taking the lead in starting one. Talk to other coordinators or other child care professionals about getting together for an informal support group. The group can begin informally and become more structured as time and energy allow.

Once they are acquainted with the various networks, Education Coordinators will want to assess their professional needs and the amount of time available for such activity. The goal is to find the right balance between networking, professional development, and daily program responsibilities.

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH STAFF

The Education Coordinator is one of the best resources for staff and parents on early childhood education and on program requirements for the Education Component. They need to have a detailed understanding of the structure, policies, and regulations of the Head Start program and be able to explain them to staff and parents.

Knowledge of early childhood education can be shared most effectively when Education Coordinators take time to visit the teachers and home visitors, to observe and provide feedback to staff, and to share resources. A leader who is in touch with the staff knows what is happening in the program and is therefore able to respond appropriately.

Table 1 gives examples of why Education Coordinators visit centers and homes and what they might communicate during these visits.

TABLE 1

SERVING AS A RESOURCE THROUGH ON-SITE VISITATION

REASON	SAMPLE STATEMENT
At the teacher's request	"You asked me for some ideas on how you could rearrange your classroom. I'm available to work with you now."
To oversee the component's compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards	"I'll be coming by on Tuesday to review the children's files."
To provide feedback to staff	"The children were very attentive during your story reading. You have an effective way of involving them."
To assess the need for training	"Several teachers have asked for a workshop on promoting self-confidence. I'll schedule an in-service training session next month."
To respond to a parent's comment	"I'm sorry to hear that you don't think that Maria is gaining from the program. I'll talk to the staff and arrange a time for us both to observe in the classroom."
To support staff development	"Lisa, you're making great progress on your CDA. I've pulled together some materials that you might want to review."
To observe children	"I kept a running record of Cecilia's actions today. Let's discuss these observations."
To observe the way the teaching team works together	"Can you tell me how you plan for each day's activities?"
To evaluate the impact of a training session	"Theresa, I liked the way you explained that positive disciplining approach that we discussed in the training session last week. Allison's mother seemed to respond well to the choices you offered her."
To assess the need for new equipment	"I can see that we do need more tricycles for the playground."
To let the staff know you care about them	"You look like you have more energy today, Edna. I'm glad you're finally over that cold."
To provide on-site training	"Your large muscle activity was good for the four-year-olds but seemed too difficult for the younger children. Why not try . . . ?"

To learn	"I've never seen that technique before, but it was very effective. Perhaps you could share it at the next staff meeting."
To serve as a mediator	"Mrs. Jones, I'm sorry if you were inconvenienced by the teacher's actions, but she is required to follow established program policy."
To help with a difficult child	"We've talked several times about John's aggressive behavior. I'll observe him during the morning session and offer some suggestions."

DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Because Education Coordinators are responsible for so many different tasks, they need general management strategies. These include decision making, effective communication, time management, and stress management.

This section explains the importance of each strategy. Tips for each are provided in the *Resource Papers*. In addition, the resource list at the end of this chapter includes a few of the numerous references that provide more information on these topics.

EFFECTIVE DECISION MAKING

Education Coordinators face countless decisions concerning program plans and procedures. Because of the intercomponent relationship of Head Start, the vast majority of these decisions are made in cooperation with the Director, other component coordinators, staff, and/or parents.

In making decisions, Education Coordinators often contend with personal, emotional, organizational, and political pressures. To keep a program running smoothly, decisions—from the most routine to the most complex—have to be made in a timely and effective manner. Due to limited time, many decisions may be made without the desired input from others. Although this may solve the issue or problem in the short term, it may result in duplication of effort or in the omission of something important. In addition, making decisions without soliciting input may discourage future participation and leave people feeling that they have little control over the decisions. This can result in a segmented program or one that does not meet the needs of the children and families involved.

One of the most effective methods for making group decisions is decision by consensus. This process, which corresponds with the Head Start philosophy of participatory management, ensures that everyone involved has an opportunity to express his/her position fully. Consensus results when there is a clear alternative that most members subscribe to and when those involved have had a chance to be heard and to explore all options.

Unfortunately, while consensus building is effective, it also is time-consuming and can lengthen the decision-making process. Nevertheless, it is vital to the very nature of the Head Start program. When all opinions are considered carefully, group members will feel that the decision was fair and they may be more willing to implement it.

The following suggestions will help Education Coordinators receive input as quickly and effectively as possible and still incorporate the principles of participatory management and consensus building:

- **Use the telephone**. While a meeting of all component coordinators might be hard to schedule, a quick call to each may achieve the same result. In each conversation the Education Coordinator can summarize feedback received from others. Conference calls are also an option.

- **Put requests in writing**. A memo can be used to announce an upcoming decision and solicit comments. Recipients can be asked to write comments on the memo or complete a short feedback form and return it by a certain date.
- **Use regularly planned meetings**. A period in a regular staff meeting can be reserved to obtain comments on an impending decision or a persistent problem.
- **Keep a suggestion box**. This permits staff, component coordinators, and parents to comment on policies, procedures, and operations anonymously and spontaneously. Suggestions can be considered and discussed with other group members who might be affected by the decision.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

The Education Coordinator communicates with the Head Start Director, other component coordinators, and education staff as well as with parents, advisory committee members, public school officials, and other early childhood education advocates.

Good, clear communication contributes to effective leadership. The nature of the communication influences behavior and opinions. Poorly communicated messages often cause frustration and confusion. Good communication can increase productivity, improve interpersonal relations, and facilitate cooperative problem solving between individuals and among groups.

Effective communication involves giving or exchanging messages that are clear and exact. Messages are transmitted verbally as well as nonverbally through body movements, facial expressions, tone, and pitch. In addition, other factors, such as the emotional climate and the time and place where the interaction occurs, influence how a message is received. Effective communication requires continuous feedback to ensure that the messages being received are the ones that are intended.

The *Resource Papers* include tips for communicating effectively with Head Start staff (II-5-6). In addition, Education Coordinators can improve communication by observing the following guidelines:

- **Adhere to established policies that support communication**. Head Start Performance Standards require input from parents and other component coordinators at many junctures. That interaction should be encouraged. Schedule meetings when members can attend. Select locations that are accessible. Allow sufficient time so that all concerns can be voiced. Whenever possible, direct people with complaints to the people who can actually do something about them. Spend time on solutions.
- **Keep communication channels open**. Encourage an atmosphere of trust and respect. Let staff know that their opinions, needs, and concerns are respected and will be considered carefully in the decisions that are made. Clarify misunderstandings when they arise. Explain any controversial decisions.
- **Hold meetings that encourage communication**. Begin each meeting by explaining its purpose and reviewing the topics to be discussed. Summarize and record conclusions after lengthy discussions. Close each meeting by restating any major decisions or actions to be taken. Agree on who is responsible, what is to be done, and when the tasks should be completed.

TIME MANAGEMENT

Leaders who work efficiently and help others complete assignments in a timely manner command respect and confidence. Effective use of time enhances a leader's effectiveness.

Although most people complain that they don't have enough time, "each of us already has all the time there is."[1] The solution to the need for more time is not acquiring more of it but rather using what exists efficiently and effectively.

Failure to organize and plan are major time wasters. Because many Education Coordinators are former classroom teachers, they realize the need for planning daily activities and are familiar with planning strategies. However, they may have difficulty in adhering to the plan once it has been made. Most people experience an occasional emergency that upsets the daily plan; for effective managers, such an emergency is temporary and things return quickly to normal. Some Education Coordinators, however, have a pattern of responding to one crisis after another, with many of the day's tasks being pushed ahead to an already crowded following day. This leads to frustration, delays, and reduced self-confidence.

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[1] R. Alec Mackenzie, *The Time Trap: How to Get More Done In Less Time* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1972), p. 1.

To overcome this, Education Coordinators might consider the following:

- **Be proactive rather than reactive**. Plan ahead rather than responding when things go wrong. Emergencies will be easier to handle and may even occur less frequently.
- **Delegate**. Delegating can save time and money and help staff and parents grow. Whenever possible, Education Coordinators can use staff, parents, and volunteers to share some of the tasks.
- **Act**. Too often when faced with difficult decisions, managers spend time worrying and trying to anticipate what the outcomes or responses might be. Time could be better spent on other tasks. Worry often makes the problem seem worse than it is and inhibits finding a resolution. By taking action, the Education Coordinator is more in control of the situation.
- **Know when to stop**. Accuracy and quality are important, but there is a point when the additional effort will not significantly improve the situation. The time allocated will vary with the importance of the issue being addressed.

Other time management strategies are included in the *Resource Papers* (II-7).

STRESS MANAGEMENT

The role of the Education Coordinator is complex and sometimes involves stressful situations and challenges. Although experts acknowledge that work stress is not necessarily negative, it can become a problem at times.

The solution to stress is not to eliminate it altogether but to keep it at a level where it is still a positive, motivating force. Stress management prepares the Education Coordinator to handle stress and to thrive as an educator and leader.

Stress management involves taking care of oneself. It includes improving overall body condition and developing the ability to truly relax, managing time effectively, developing formal and informal feedback and support systems, and promoting professional growth and stimulation.

The *Resource Papers* (II-8) include tips for managing stress effectively. In addition, the resource list at the end of this chapter includes several references that offer practical suggestions on stress management.

CHILD ADVOCACY

As employees of a federally funded program, Education Coordinators must be mindful of laws governing when they can engage in advocacy activities that might be considered political. This is not permitted during working hours.

However, Education Coordinators are still in a good position to serve as advocates for quality programs for children both within the program and in the community. While the term "child advocate" often brings to mind writing letters to public officials and testifying at hearings, the advocacy role can involve other activities. As a child advocate, the Education Coordinator can be an active advocate for children by supporting developmental and comprehensive programs and services, providing information on how to promote optional development of young children, and promoting public policies that support children and their families.

HOW THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR CAN BEST SERVE AS AN ADVOCATE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

Within the program, it is the Education Coordinator's job to ensure that the education staff has the ability to promote the development of young children. As discussed throughout these pages, the appropriate training and supervision of staff is essential to establishing such an environment. A well-trained and well-supervised staff cannot interact effectively with children if working conditions are poor. In overseeing staff training and supervision and supporting improved working conditions for the staff, the

Education Coordinator is indirectly acting as an advocate for children.

Advocacy for children also includes active involvement with families. Head Start has long supported the concept of child development as a partnership between the program and the home. Along with the Parent Involvement and Social Services Coordinators, the Education Coordinator is an advocate for adequate physical, social, and emotional resources for families. The Social Services Coordinator provides training for education staff on how to spot family problems and the appropriate procedures to follow. In addition, staffings on individual children and their families, which include teachers, home visitors, and social service/parent involvement staff, are valuable. The Education Coordinator ensures that meetings are held on a regular basis, that all parties understand their responsibilities, and that follow-up activities occur.

Finally, advocacy for children extends into the community. Public policy regarding child care is affected when the general public and government officials begin to understand the needs of young children and their families. Education Coordinators can help by sharing the "Head Start Story" with the media and public officials. They can also join with others through networks, coalitions, or professional associations to lend their voices, letters, and support to issues that benefit child care in their community.

Advocacy in the community also involves working with the elementary schools to promote the development of linkages, ensure a smooth transition from Head Start to kindergarten, and to gain their support. (Additional information on working with the elementary schools appears in Chapter IV.)

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY

Some strategies for successful advocacy are provided below:

- Talk with the Head Start Director about policies and regulations regarding advocacy.
- Become familiar with local public officials including representatives to the state legislature and Congress. The League of Women Voters in local communities can provide this information.
- Let public officials know about the program through letters, newsletters, and greetings from the children.
- Share program expertise on child care-related issues with local officials.
- Invite policymakers to visit the program during an open house or a special ceremony.
- Share stories about program activities with the media.
- Give special recognition to public officials who support children's programs.
- Keep staff and parents informed about emerging issues affecting children.
- Become active in professional associations that are involved in child advocacy activities.
- Lend support to local networks or coalitions working on children's issues.
- Encourage the education staff to become advocates as well.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL LEADERSHIP

- Keep the children and families as the primary focus for all activities.
- Develop weekly and monthly plans that include commitments, meetings, and due dates.
- Include time for visits to the classrooms or homes, regular interaction with staff, professional development, and discussions with the Head Start Director and other coordinators.
- Delegate assignments to others; keep in touch and provide regular feedback.
- Use the consensus approach to decision making when appropriate.
- Review and maintain copies of all documents that explain Head Start policy, procedures, and standards.
- Communicate with the coordinators of the other Head Start components on a regular basis.
- Clarify any uncertainties about roles and responsibilities.
- Make a commitment to plan for professional development.

RESOURCES

LEADERSHIP

Katz, Lillian, ed. *Current Topics in Early Childhood Education*. Ablex Publishing Co., 355 Chestnut Street, Norwood, NJ 07648. 1977- . $29.50 (cloth). $18.95 (paperback).

This annual series provides integrated reviews and analyses of research and development in the field of early childhood education for an interdisciplinary audience. The volumes are of interest to teachers and researchers involved in preschool, primary, day care, and related aspects of child rearing and education of the young child.

Neugebauer, Roger. "How Not to Be A Boss." *Child Care Information Exchange*, November/December 1982, pp. 18-19. Write P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98052 or check local university libraries.

This article describes five management types that are guaranteed not to work—The Benevolent Boss, The Disappearing Boss, The Workaholic Wonder, The R2D2 Boss, and The Tyrannical Boss.

Neugebauer, Roger. "How to Be A People-Oriented Boss." *Child Care Information Exchange*, November/December 1982, 20-24. Write P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98052 or check local university libraries.

This follow-up article defines an effective boss and gives ten characteristics that effective people-oriented bosses have in common.

Wilson, Marlene. *Survival Skills for Managers*. Volunteer Management Associates, 279 South Cedar Brook Road, Boulder, CO 80302. 1981. $10.95 plus $2.00 postage.

This unusual approach to helping managers emphasizes ways that managers can enable others to do their best. It contains excellent discussions on creative problem solving, power, negotiations, conflict, and stress.

INTEGRATION WITH OTHERS IN HEAD START

Pinkstaff, Di, and Cansler, D. *The Integration of Head Start Components: A Materials Manual*. Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Lincoln Center, Merritt Mill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. 1978.

This manual is designed primarily to be used by local Head Start programs to facilitate and improve the integration of components in delivering services to children with handicapping conditions and to their families. Because these children are mainstreamed into the regular program activities in Head Start, this manual includes detailed descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of all the components and strategies for coordinating services.

SETTING THE STANDARD FOR QUALITY

Caldwell, Bettye M., and Hilliard, Asa G. *What Is Quality Child Care?* National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009. 1985. $2.50.

This NAEYC publication includes papers presented by the two authors in response to this basic question. Dr. Caldwell divides her responses into two smaller questions: "What is Child Care?" and "What is Quality?" Dr. Hilliard states that quality child care requires the respect of children as human beings, a conducive environment, and high-quality staff.

CDA COMPETENCY STANDARDS SERIES (See Resources for Chapter I)

National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. *Accreditation Criteria and Procedures*. National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009. 1984. $6.00.

This publication explains NAEYC's system for accrediting early childhood programs. Policies and procedures for accreditation and criteria for receiving the credential are included.

DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Jorde, Paula. *Avoiding Burnout: Strategies for Managing Time, Space, and People in Early Childhood*. Acropolis Books, 2400 17th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20009. 1982. $14.95 plus $2.00 postage.

This easy-to-read book is full of ideas on managing yourself and others. It is especially relevant because it is tailored specifically to day-care providers.

Neugebauer, Roger. "Making Decisions." *Child Care Information Exchange*, January/February 1982, pp. 17-26. Write P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98052 or check local university libraries.

This article discusses the results of a study on directors' and teachers' perceptions of how program decisions are made in their centers. Suggestions on how to make decisions from renowned management expert Peter Drucker also are provided.

Schein, Edgar H. "Accord Without Discord—Making Decisions in Groups." *Child Care Information Exchange*, February, 1980, pp. 21-24. Write P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98052 or check local university libraries.

Dr. Schein defines five different methods of group decision making that are often used in child-care settings. Examples of how each is used are provided.

ADVOCACY

The Children's Defense Fund. *CDF Reports*. Children's Defense Fund, 122 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001. (800) 424-9602. $29.95 for 12 issues.

This monthly newsletter provides updates on the latest developments affecting children and families.

Public Relations Committee of the National Head Start Association. *Tell the Head Start Story: Our Future Depends on It*. Betty Minor, College of Education, Drake University, 25th and University, Des Moines, IA 50311. 1984. $3 plus $3 postage.

This resource describes ways to get the Head Start message across to the general public and to parents. It includes media activities, such as how to write a news release and how to develop spots for radio and television.

JOURNALS AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Black Child Advocate
National Black Child Development Institute
1463 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 387-1281
Subscriptions: $20/year membership fee (4 issues)

Child Care Information Exchange
Box C-44
Redmond, WA 98052
(206) 882-1066
Subscriptions: $20/year (6 issues)

Child Care Information Service
c/o NAEYC
1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 232-8777 or (800) 424-2460
A national, centralized source of information about child care.

Childhood Education
Association for Childhood Education International
11141 Georgia Avenue, Suite 200
Wheaton, MD 20902
(301) 942-2443
Subscriptions: $32 membership fee (5 issues)

Children Today
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW, Room 356-G
Washington, DC 20201
Subscriptions: $16/year (6 issues); send subscription request to Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402.

Competency News for the CDA Community
Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition
(Child Development Associate
National Credentialing Program)
1341 G Street, N.W., Suite 802
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 638-6656
Subscriptions: Free to candidates on mailing list

Dimensions Quarterly
Southern Association for Children Under Six
P.O. 5403 Brady Station
Little Rock, AR 72215
(501) 227-6404

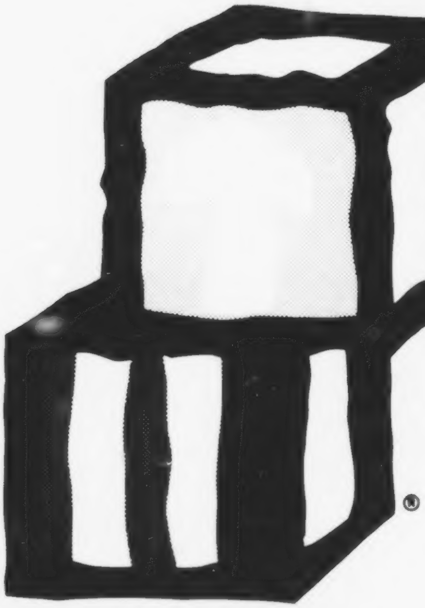
ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education
University of Illiniois
College of Education
805 West Pennsylvania Avenue
Urbana, IL 61801

Journal of Research in Childhood Education
Association for Childhood Education International
11141 Georgia Avenue, Suite 200
Wheaton, MD 20902
(301) 942-2443
Subscriptions: $20-members; $30-nonmembers (2 issues)

Young Children
National Association for the Education of Young Children
1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20009
(202) 232-8777 or (800) 424-2460
Subscriptions: $20/year-nonmembers; (6 issues)

National Head Start Association
Executive Director, National Office
1021 31st Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 337-6650

III. Planning the Education Component



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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR FOR PLANNING

- Overseeing the annual review and, if necessary, revising and updating the Education Component Plan.
- Analyzing the Community Needs Assessment (CNA) as it relates to the Education Component Plan.
- Facilitating parent, staff, and community participation in the planning process.
- Addressing self-assessment results in the Education Component Plan.
- Coordinating with other components throughout the planning process.
- Implementing a process to select and adapt a curriculum that is consistent with the Head Start Performance Standards and early childhood development theory.
- Presenting the final draft of the plan to the Director.
- Assisting the Director and parents in preparing and monitoring the Education Component budget.
- Promoting efficient use of budget funds through cost effective use of materials and careful purchasing of supplies.
- Assisting the Director and parents in staffing the Education Component.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Read the current Education Component Plan.
- Discuss with the Director the process used by the program to develop/update component plans.
- Review the budget for the Education Component.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: PLANNING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

THE EDUCATION COMPONENT PLAN

	Yes	Needs My Attention
1. I provide training or other support to facilitate parent and staff participation.	______	______
2. I know the Program Year End date (PYE) for the program.	______	______
3. I address self-assessment results in the annual update of the Plan.	______	______
4. I confer with other component coordinators to complete the Plan.	______	______
5. The Plan includes the program's curriculum.	______	______

THE EIGHT-STEP PLANNING PROCESS

	Yes	Needs My Attention
6. The Planning Process includes the following:		
a. Analysis of Community Needs Assessment (CNA) data.	______	______
b. Review of the Performance Standards.	______	______
c. Use of a planning format that tells *who* does *what*, *how*, and *when*.	______	______
d. Defining program philosophy with staff and parents.	______	______
e. Developing goals and objectives.	______	______
f. Establishing the curriculum.	______	______
g. Developing/adapting strategies for all options.	______	______
h. Identifying responsibilities, time lines, and documentation.	______	______
i. Final review by staff, parents, PC, Director and Executive Director.	______	______
7. I distribute copies of the Education Component Plan to every center.	______	______

BUDGETING

	Yes	Needs My Attention
8. The budget includes home-based and classroom equipment, materials, and supplies.	______	______
9. In-kind contributions are recorded regularly.	______	______
10. Center staff do a periodic inventory of equipment and materials.	______	______

	Yes	Needs My Attention
STAFFING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT		
11. There are written job descriptions for each job category.	______	______
12. There is a written procedure for recruiting, screening, and hiring staff.	______	______
13. Staff and parents involved in hiring receive training.	______	______
14. Reference checks are carried out.	______	______
15. Classroom observations are part of the interview process for teachers.	______	______
16. Opportunities to observe adult interactions are part of the interview process for home visitors.	______	______

Review your responses, especially those you marked "Needs My Attention," and circle those topics you want to work on. List them below in order of their importance to you.

____

____

____

THE EDUCATION COMPONENT PLAN

The Education Component Plan is the blueprint for implementing the activities of the component. It describes how the component will implement the Head Start Performance Standards for Education Services and provides clear goals and objectives. The Education Component Plan, which is developed by the Director, staff, parents, and community representatives of each Head Start program, lets everyone involved know what approaches and strategies will be used to ensure that program goals and objectives are accomplished. The format is detailed enough to specify *who* will do *what*, *how* they will do it, and *when* it will be done. The Performance Standards require that the Education Component be reviewed annually and updated or revised when necessary. It is good practice to update the plan as a part of the annual review process.

Most Education Coordinators assume their positions in programs that have an Education Component Plan. Their task, then, is to work with staff, parents, and the community to review the plan and update or revise it as needed. There are times, however, when it is necessary to develop a completely new plan (e.g., in a newly-funded program, in a program whose needs have changed, or in an effort to improve services to children and families). Many of the steps involved in developing new component plans are similar to those involved in reviewing or updating established plans. Unless otherwise noted, the steps outlined in this chapter apply to both developing a new plan and updating an existing one.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

As in other organizations, the Head Start planning process involves defining specific objectives and designing activities that will accomplish them. However, there are several unique features of the Head Start planning process that affect planning activities:

- Participatory management
- The annual self-assessment
- Cross-component coordination

PARTICIPATORY MANAGEMENT

Participatory management requires that staff and parents work together to develop and operate the program. Parent participation is facilitated by the staff through parent training sessions and thoughtful consideration of parents' needs. For example, when working with non-English-speaking parents, special care must be taken to encourage their participation. This may include using interpreters, translating newsletters or other communications, allowing more time for meetings, and using visual aids.

As a result of meaningful participation in the management of the program, staff and parents share in the decision-making process and have a greater commitment to achieving the program's goals and objectives. In addition, the quality of the services is enhanced because families have opportunities to make decisions about the services they receive.

In planning the Education Component, participatory management is used to involve persons from a variety of populations. The Education Coordinator takes the lead in this activity, assisted by education staff, other component coordinators and supervisors, parents of children enrolled in the program, community representatives, specialists from various disciplines (e.g., speech therapists, psychologists), local education agency personnel, and others in the community.

THE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

The required annual self-assessment is an integral part of each program's management system. As stated in 70.2 (Appendix B of the Head Start Policy Manual: The Parents), *"Head Start parents have operating responsibility for conducting the self-assessment."* The self-assessment is a process for examining how well the program has maintained compliance with the Performance Standards. (A more detailed discussion of the self-assessment process appears in Chapter VIII.)

The schedule for developing the Education Component Plan takes into account when the self-assessment will occur. Information provided by the self-assessment is used to bring the program into compliance, to plan improvements, and to update the plan. For example, if a lack of compliance with Performance Standard 1304.2-2(b)(3)—Promotion of physical growth—was noted on the program's self-assessment report, strategies for complying with this objective would be developed. These might include staff training and emphasis on the physical growth and development section of the curriculum. The self-assessment team also may have identified a lack of indoor and outdoor equipment for large muscle development. Information about the purchase of this equipment would then be included as part of the program budget.

CROSS-COMPONENT COORDINATION

Because Head Start is an interdisciplinary program, each section of the Performance Standards is cross-referenced with other sections. One component cannot be planned without those responsible for the planning communicating with others. For example, if the Education Component Plan calls for parents to accompany classes on field trips, this is discussed with the Parent Involvement Coordinator, and the Parent Involvement Component Plan notes this activity as well. If the Health Coordinator wants a specific health education program incorporated into the classroom curriculum, this can be discussed with those planning the Education Component, and noted in both the education and health component plans. When one activity is noted in two component plans, the information can be given in detail in one and briefly cross-referenced in the other.

THE EIGHT-STEP PROCESS—A SUMMARY

This chapter describes an eight-step process used to develop, review, update, or revise the Education Component Plan:

- **Step one**—organize a planning group composed of staff, parents, and community representatives;
- **Step two**—review the community needs assessment;
- **Step three**—review the Performance Standards and develop the plan format;
- **Step four**—define the program philosophy;
- **Step five**—agree on the goals and objectives of the education program;
- **Step six**—establish a curriculum based on the Performance Standards and the needs of the community;
- **Step seven**—identify responsibilities, determine time lines and documentation on procedures; and
- **Step eight**—complete a final review process.

STEP ONE: ORGANIZE A PLANNING GROUP OF STAFF, PARENTS, AND COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES

The Performance Standards require that parents and staff participate in planning the education program. One of the most effective ways to meet this requirement is to establish an education advisory committee. This committee, which might be a sub-group of the Policy Council/Committee, is composed of parents, staff, and community representatives who are interested in and/or have expertise in early childhood development. Although this committee is not a Head Start program requirement, it can provide helpful support and input for a variety of tasks, including planning, monitoring, evaluation, technical assistance, and training.

An education advisory committee can participate in all stages of the planning process outlined in this chapter. The committee's recommendations are ultimately taken to the Director and then to the Policy Council/Committee for final approval.

Because of the importance of its work, committee members should be selected with care and should reflect the cultural diversity of the community. A list of candidates might include Policy Council/Committee members with an expressed interest in the classroom and/or parent education activities, Head Start parents who have participated in Education Component activities but are not necessarily members of the Policy Council/Committee, and education staff. Staff from each of the other components may participate if their responsibilities are related to the work of the Education Component.

Community members may include local education agency administrators and faculty, staff from other day care or preschool programs, public school administrators, early childhood education faculty from a local college or university, community action agency representatives, child care advocates, and other interested people. Most community representatives will need a comprehensive orientation, covering both the organization and goals of Head Start, and giving specifics about the local program.

If carefully selected, these individuals can be a real asset to the Education Component. For example, a faculty member from the early childhood department of a local college or university who is willing to donate time to Head Start by serving on the education advisory committee could provide training, become a sounding board and a resource for new ideas, and be an advocate for Head Start in the community.

The following guidelines may be helpful when selecting committee members:

- Limit the size of the committee. Because the education advisory committee is a working committee, it should be a manageable size. Seven to ten members is large enough to provide diversity, yet small enough to allow interaction.
- Avoid having so many experts on the committee that the other members become reluctant participants.
- Select committee members who will work well together.
- Select committee members who will give useful and constructive feedback and assistance.
- Select committee members with complementary experiences and skills.

STEP TWO: REVIEW THE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT

A Community Needs Assessment (CNA) is a thorough survey of a geographical area in which a Head Start program proposes to operate. It is a survey of the needs of the people living there, the services that already exist to assist them, and the community and educational establishments that can serve as resources.

The CNA is used to

> *identify all eligible children in its target areas, serve those families in greatest need and in the proper program option, and make full use of the services and expertise which the community offers.* (From ACYF, Head Start Administrative Regulations Guide, September 1982.)

HOW THE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT IS CONDUCTED

According to 70.2

> *the Grantee/Delegate Executive Director is granted the operating responsibility to see that the CNA is conducted. The Head Start Policy Council and the Head Start Director must be consulted in this process.*

Therefore, the Head Start Director may ask the Education Coordinator to provide relevant information to be used in the assessment. In addition, the CNA data are used as a basis for recommending program options for new or changing programs, or for validating the decision to continue the established program option. As this is one of the first tasks in the planning process, it is imperative that the information be available as the component plan is reviewed or updated.

The CNA is used in the program's planning process to:

- develop the program proposal and grant applications;
- select or validate program options; and
- select and adapt the curriculum.

Community agencies that regularly collect and maintain data that can be used in conducting the CNA include:

- city and county planning departments;
- state Census Bureau offices;
- local housing and community development agencies;
- child care resource and referral system offices;
- grantee/delegate planning departments;
- local departments of health, social services, human resources, etc.;
- elementary schools;
- local and state education agencies;
- public health departments;

- chambers of commerce;
- state Employment Security Administrations;
- medical and dental societies;
- United Way agencies; and
- public and private agencies providing other services to families and children.

The agencies listed above are normally contacted during a Head Start program's initial application for funding. Personal contacts are often used to acquire the information, although much of the data is available through published reports. This information is reviewed and updated on a yearly basis.

USING THE COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT TO DEVELOP THE EDUCATION PLAN

The Education Coordinator presents the data concerning the local community's problems, concerns, and available resources to the planning group. Data that may be needed to review or update an Education Component plan may include:

- areas where families with incomes at or below the poverty level live;
- number of children between the ages of three and five in these families;
- specific health/nutritional problems in the community;
- types and number of handicapping conditions found among all children in the community;
- primary languages and ethnic origin/race of families in the community; and
- providers of social, medical, dental, nutrition, and mental health services, and other types of human services in the community.

RECOMMENDING/VALIDATING PROGRAM OPTIONS

Each program uses the CNA to determine the best match between the community's needs and resources and the program option to be implemented. (A complete description of the Head Start program options appears in Appendix A of the Performance Standards.)

Head Start programs may implement either a double session or a full-day center-based program. Implementing a double session results in more children being served; however, the program must comply with the requirements for breaks and planning time for staff. (Refer to Appendix A of the Performance Standards for these requirements.) Full-day sessions are implemented in communities where many parents work or are in job training programs. Head Start policy on full-day sessions states that they should last no more than six hours per day. Full-day care can only be provided when "*there is no suitable caregiver in the home due to employment, illness, or other reasons.*" (Transmittal Notice N-30-336-1, 8-21-72.)

The CNA also is used to verify or change features of the program design, e.g., the ages of the children served or the location of a center. When the CNA indicates that a Head Start grantee needs to provide services to individual children for more than one year, the program must ensure that the curriculum used for the second year is developmentally appropriate and does not repeat the activities from the year before.

The CNA may indicate that the home-based option is the preferred primary vehicle for Head Start services, or should be used in addition to a center-based program. The home-based option offers the following benefits.

- The family's competence in supporting and sustaining a child's development is strengthened.
- Overall parent involvement in the child's education and development is increased.
- Head Start services may be delivered to families that otherwise would not receive them.
- Services to families are more individualized.

Questions that might facilitate the process of recommending or validating a program option include the following.

- Will parent and community needs be met through home-based, center-based, or variations in the center attendance option?
- What are the distances children will have to travel?
- Which option will serve the most children and families?
- Is the population transient? Stable?
- Will the seasons of the year affect the families to be served (e.g., migratory communities)?

- Are there local customs that will make it difficult for a home visitor to be accepted? How will the families feel about strangers coming into their homes initially?
- What strategies need to be developed to orient the community to option differences?

STEP THREE: REVIEW THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND DEVELOP FORMAT FOR THE PLAN

The next step is to review the Head Start Performance Standards for the Education Component. This is done each year, whether the component is developing a new Education Plan or is updating a previously developed plan. As the basis for program operations, the Performance Standards identify what must be provided for all children and families, regardless of program option, education program philosophy, or curriculum selected. They list the requirements for each component. A review of the Performance Standards for all components, and particularly those for the Education Component, is a good way to prepare for a discussion of program philosophy, goals, and objectives. Present the Performance Standards in a way that is clear and understandable so that the staff, parents, and community representatives can provide input on how the program can meet the requirements. The outline in Table 2 may be helpful.

TABLE 2

SUMMARY
EDUCATION COMPONENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

1304.2-1 **Education services objectives.** This section includes five broad-based objectives for the Head Start Education Component. Every Head Start program must design its educational services to meet these objectives. Programs use these objectives as a starting point, usually breaking them down into more specific, locally determined goals and objectives. These objectives were presented in the Introduction to this guide.

1304.2-2 **Education services plan content: operations.** This section specifies that each program must include in its plan the following elements with regard to the services provided by their Education Component:

(a) Component strategies for achieving the education objectives, including:

- an organized series of experiences designed to meet the individual needs and differences of children;
- strategies used to avoid sex-role stereotyping; and
- methods of assisting parents.

(b) Provisions for:

- a supportive social and emotional climate;
- activities for intellectual development; and
- the promotion of physical growth.

(c) Plans for how the program will provide individualization, to include:

- the establishment of an individualized program through the selection of an appropriate curriculum and staff, and the inclusion of parents as resource persons.

(d) A plan for how each child's progress will be assessed, including:

- the procedures for the assessment of growth and development; and
- the integration of the educational aspects of other Head Start components with the Education Component activities.

(e) This section includes standards related to staff and parent training. The knowledge and understanding of staff and parents shall be enhanced by:

- encouraging parents to participate in program planning and in center, classroom, and home acvitities;
- providing parent education activities; and
- providing a staff training program.

1304.2-3 Education services plan content: facilities.

(a) This section includes minimum standards for the physical environment used by the Education Component. It states that the plan must discuss how the program will provide facilities that are consistent with the health, safety, and developmental needs of the children.

(b) In addition, standards are included for the classroom materials. As specified in the standards, the plan must provide for appropriate and sufficient furniture, equipment, and materials.

THE PLAN FORMAT

The Head Start National Office does not require a standard format for component plans. Whatever format is selected, it will be most useful if it:

- includes sections that identify:
  - **what** is going to happen (the goals and objectives),
  - **how** it is to be done (the strategies or learning activities),
  - **when** it will happen (when each action will begin and end, when appropriate),
  - **who** is responsible (staff person with the operating responsibility for implementation),
  - **project outcomes** for each strategy (what the program hopes to accomplish),
  - **monitoring progress** toward meeting goals and objectives (how the component will track progress), and
  - **modifications or additions** to the plan (added during the program year);
- results in a document that is easy to read, clear, concise, and flexible enough to allow for updating as program needs and objectives change; and
- includes references to the Performance Standards for each objective (to demonstrate that all standards have been addressed).

A narrative format is used by some programs, but is difficult to amend. Chart outlines may be unfamiliar to parents, but they are easier to change. Perhaps the most popular format is one in which the goal is written across the top of the page, and there are columns for Performance Standards references, objectives, strategies, person responsible, and time frames. An example of this format appears in the *Resource Papers* for this chapter (III-1). A sample plan outline appears in Table 3.

TABLE 3

EDUCATION PLAN OUTLINE

I. Background Information

    A. Summary of community needs and characteristics
    B. Summary of last year's program—strengths and weaknesses

II. Program Option
    A. Option selected
    B. Rationale for selection

III. Program Philosophy
    (Belief Statements)

IV. Educational Goals and Objectives

V. Curriculum
    A. Materials and environment
    B. Developmental indoor and outdoor activities that meet Performance Standards requirements
    C. System for assessing and tracking children's development
    D. Management system for curriculum implementation
    E. Curriculum training for staff and parents

VI. Time Lines and Staff Assignments

VII. Documentation to Be Maintained

STEP FOUR: DEFINE THE PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The program philosophy defines the guiding principles that underlie the educational approach. It is the basis for determining program goals and objectives and developing or adapting implementation strategies.

The core of the Head Start program's philosophy is found in the Performance Standards. They define goals and objectives for the education program that are grounded in early childhood development theory. The guidance offered in the Performance Standards as suggestions for achieving the goals and objectives of the education program are examples of developmentally appropriate practices. Thus, Education Coordinators have a place to start in defining and explaining the program's philosophy.

DEFINING A DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAM

A developmentally appropriate program means that the experiences offered to children will be **age-appropriate** as well as **individually appropriate** for each child.

Child development research demonstrates that children grow and develop in predictable stages. All children pass through the same stages in all areas of development—physical, emotional, social, and cognitive. For example, children participate in parallel play activities before they can successfully play cooperatively with other children. Children scribble before they draw recognizable shapes and representational pictures. Jumping in place precedes hopping on one foot. Children can identify concrete objects before they can understand abstract concepts.

A developmentally appropriate program also recognizes that children are individuals who grow and develop at their own rate. No two children are likely to be at the same stage in all areas of development at a given time. The ability to recognize where each child is in his/her development and a knowledge of how to promote growth to the next stage is basic to the Head Start philosophy. Presenting information or tasks to children before they are ready will not produce early learning. Actually, children may become so frustrated by this process that their attitudes toward learning will be affected.

To explain a developmental program to staff and parents, the Education Coordinator may need to provide examples of what children are physically and mentally capable of knowing and doing during the early years of life. The Education Coordinator may choose to develop and conduct a workshop using audiovisual aids and examples of children's work. The information presented can be organized by skill categories or by the child's age so that parents can offer suggestions on what and how children can learn.

Because parents are their children's first and foremost teachers, they have valuable information to share about their children's learning processes. Many parents today are concerned about school readiness, and particularly about the skills involved in reading, writing, and arithmetic. They may wish to see a program that stresses reading from books, printing drills, rote memorization of number activities, etc. If so, it is the Education Coordinator's task to translate these suggestions into developmentally sequenced activities. This addresses the concern that the children learn to read and demonstrates that the child's Head Start experiences are leading toward that long-range goal. The Education Coordinator is in the best position to explain to parents that the most effective way to accomplish their goal is to provide developmentally appropriate activities. These activities encompass the prerequisite skills achieved prior to reading, writing, and arithmetic activities. With a firm foundation of appropriate, developmentally sequenced activities each child will have a better chance to succeed in school.

HOW CHILDREN LEARN

The next step in explaining program philosophy is to review the principles of pedagogy—the art and science of how children learn. A hands-on workshop designed to help staff and parents experience how children learn is one way to convey this information. Include the following principles of how children learn.

- Socioemotional development is closely related to cognitive development. Children must feel secure in the environment and good about themselves and their families.
- Children learn actively through their interactions with people and objects in the environment. They explore, try out ideas, see what happens, and attempt to make sense of the results based on knowledge they already have.
- New experiences, skills, and information should be closely related to what children already know and what they can do.
- Learning experiences should begin with the simple and move to the more complex, from the concrete to the more abstract.
- Children learn about the world and gain a better understanding of themselves if they have opportunities to engage in a variety of experiences.
- Children use their whole bodies and all their senses in learning about the world.

STEP FIVE: AGREE ON GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

According to the Performance Standards, *"The overall goal of the Head Start program is to bring about a greater degree of social competence in children of low income families."* (1304.1-3.) This statement provides the Head Start community of staff, parents, advocates, and other interested persons with a broad sense of direction.

In addition to this general goal, the group developing the Education Component Plan may identify additional goals for the Education Component based on the specific community being served. These will enable everyone who provides services in the component to work toward a common end. They will allow the component to maintain its focus as activities are planned and implemented, and they will exist in conjunction with the goals noted in other component plans.

GOAL STATEMENTS

The goals for the Education Component are statements about the services the staff will provide children and their families. Unlike the curriculum goals, which address what the *children* will do, these goal statements include information about *what* the program will be providing and *for whom*. They are determined by:

- the areas delineated in the education section of the Performance Standards (see Step Three);
- the program philosophy;
- the analysis of the CNA data; and
- the competency areas defined by the Child Development Associate National Credentialing Program.

Sample goal statements appear in the *Resource Paper* (III-2).

DEVELOPING OBJECTIVES[1]

Once the component's focus has been established by goals statements, objectives for reaching these goals are identified. Objectives are statements of outcomes to be accomplished by the component, and usually consist of three parts.

- They begin with word "to" followed by an action verb (to conduct).
- They include a statement of the object of the action verb (to conduct meetings of staff and parents).
- They end with information about who or what will result from the action (to conduct meetings of staff and parents to discuss developmental needs of children).

The objectives that appear in the Performance Standards can be used verbatim or expanded to better address local program needs. In order to be useful and realistic, objectives should be written after a careful assessment of available resources and constraints. When writing objectives:

- make them measurable (refer to time frames);
- collaborate with other components to integrate activities and efforts;
- be innovative;
- use the Performance Standards and the self-assessment results as guides; and
- evaluate actual resources for accomplishing objectives (trained staff, supplies, equipment, facilities, time, and money).

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[1] Adapted from *Educational Planning Guide* (Seattle, WA: Region X Office of Child Development, 1975), pp. 55-56.

STEP SIX: ESTABLISH THE CURRICULUM

The program's curriculum reflects the Head Start philosophy, goals, and objectives. While some curricula address academic areas only, a Head Start curriculum is comprehensive, considers all facets of a child's development, and includes the educational aspects of all program components.

Head Start does not require that all programs use a specific curriculum model. On the contrary, the individualization and participatory management stressed by Head Start support the development or adaptation of a curriculum to match the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the local program. The curriculum used must conform to the Head Start Performance Standards, but there is room for local decision making regarding how the program will comply with these requirements. The most effective programs are those based on a well-defined curriculum selected, developed or adapted, and regularly evaluated by the staff and parents.

A DEFINITION OF CURRICULUM

What is curriculum? Is it a set of activities that teachers use with children? Is it the program's philosophy regarding early childhood education? Is it the goals and objectives we hope children will achieve? Or is it the way education staff interact with the children in the classroom? The Head Start curriculum encompasses all the above and more.

A Head Start curriculum should reflect the Performance Standards and be based on:

- sound educational theory and child development principles; and
- a clear educational approach.

It should include:

- specific goals and objectives;
- developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities for acquiring basic cognitive, social, emotional, psychomotor, and language development skills; and
- a system for documenting the children's progress in all areas of development.

To support implementation of the curriculum, there should be:

- a management system for implementing the curriculum;
- procedures for training staff and parents on the implementation of the curriculum; and
- a method for determining the effectiveness of the curriculum.

Some people say that curriculum is a **structured framework**; others maintain that it is an ongoing creative **process** that develops as staff interacts with children and reflects the changing interests and needs of the community. Actually, it is both. It is structured in that the guiding principles and child development theories on which it is based remain unchanged. This structure or framework comes from the Performance Standards and child development theory. It specifies that the daily activities will be designed to:

- be comprehensive and developmental;
- reflect the community and cultures represented in the group;
- recognize and promote the role of parents;
- be child focused;
- build on the children's skills and knowledge; and
- promote the children's self-awareness and positive self-concept.

Developing the curriculum is also a creative process. It is important that in designing, selecting, and adapting strategies, staff and parents understand the framework of the curriculum so that they are able to make consistent decisions. Individual teachers or home visitors may select different activities as they learn more about the developmental levels of the children, individual learning styles, and individual needs and interests. What remains consistent is that the activities fit into the overall framework of the curriculum, as the following examples illustrate.

- In a rural community, the teachers may help children learn to classify by collecting and sorting seeds.
- In an inner city program, the same goal may be achieved by giving children assorted keys or bottle caps to group.

- In a child's home, the home visitor may demonstrate how to play classification games using kitchen utensils or clean laundry.

In each setting, the goals are the same and the philosophy of using real objects and having children develop their own categories is also the same, but the activities designed by the staff are based on their knowledge of the children and the community.

HOW PROGRAMS ESTABLISH A CURRICULUM

Once there is a clear understanding of the philosophy and objectives for the program's curriculum, staff and parents can review existing curriculum models and resources to determine if there is one that is consistent with their needs. Education Coordinators play an important role as a resource in this selection process.

The curriculum review process is undertaken with a number of questions in mind, including the following.

- What are the underlying basic assumptions of the curriculum?
- How do these assumptions relate to the Performance Standards and what is known about how children learn?
- Is the curriculum based on developmental theory and practice?
- Is it flexible enough to be adaptable?
- Does the curriculum give staff the opportunity to make judgments and choices?
- How do these assumptions relate to the program goals and objectives developed by the staff and parents?
- Was the curriculum developed for a preschool population?
- For which age levels is the curriculum appropriate? Is the curriculum continuous for children from ages three through five or are the activities for only three-year-olds or four-year-olds?
- Does the education staff have the skills and abilities needed to implement the curriculum?
- Is extra training needed?
- Does the curriculum provide a management system?
- Is there a procedures manual for training the staff on the curriculum?
- Does the curriculum provide procedures for documenting children's progress and parents' knowledge and skills?
- Are there data available to document its implementation and findings?
- Are specific learning materials needed? If so, would the purchase/development prohibit use of this curriculum? Could learning materials be adapted?
- Does the program have access to resources or materials needed to implement the curriculum?
- Does the curriculum reflect sensitivity to different cultural backgrounds?
- Can the curriculum be adapted for children whose primary language is not English?
- Is there a nearby program that is using the curriculum in a classroom where the Education Coordinator and staff can observe its implementation?
- Are there elements of the curriculum that can be carried out by parents at home?
- If necessary, can training be provided by outside experts?

As the parents and staff review curriculum options, they may find that few seem to fit exactly the goals and objectives developed for the program. In that case, they will need to adapt a published curriculum. Therefore, it is important to choose a curriculum that is flexible enough to be adapted, although care must be taken to maintain the integrity of the curriculum or the objectives may not be achieved. It often is best to implement the curriculum model as it is described, while allowing for local program needs as indicated by the component goals and objectives. After trying the model for a year or more, further adaptations can be made to improve and expand on the curriculum.

A PROCESS FOR DEVELOPING STRATEGIES AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

It may not be possible to find a curriculum model that meets all local program needs. Staff and parents may need to develop their own strategies and activities. A number of *curriculum resources* are available and provide a rich source of ideas.

There are several ways in which the activities can be organized in developing or adapting a curriculum:

- by developmental goals;
- by pre-academic areas;
- by learning areas of the classroom; and/or
- by themes.

A curriculum organized by **developmental goals** focuses on the *process* of learning. The goals provide a framework for supporting child development. This type of curriculum makes teachers aware of the basic processes and opportunities in the classroom to enrich and extend developmental skills. Developmental experiences might be organized according to the following categories.

- Active learning
- Language development
- Representing experiences and ideas
- Logical reasoning
- Understanding time and space

Child- and teacher- or parent-initiated activities are used to enhance children's skills and extend their knowledge.

A curriculum organized by **pre-academic areas** is similar to an elementary school curriculum. Areas might include:

- Language arts
- Art
- Numbers/early math
- Physical education
- Science
- Music

A careful review of this kind of curriculum is needed to ensure that the activities are developmentally appropriate for preschool children.

In curricula organized by **areas of the classroom**, objectives and activities might be grouped in the following ways:

- House corner
- Block building
- Art
- Manipulatives
- Books
- Nature/science
- Music/movement

Such a curriculum might describe how to set up activity areas and what children can learn in each one. The teacher's role in extending and enhancing learning areas frequently found in Head Start and other early childhood programs might also be discussed.

Finally, a curriculum organized according to **themes or units** emphasizes content. Units of study are identified for the year including when they will be introduced, what materials will be needed, what trips or special activities will be planned, and what concepts and skills will be taught. Units might include:

- The school environment
- The street I live on
- People in my neighborhood
- Rivers and bridges
- The supermarket

Cultural diversity can be integrated into any of these organizational frameworks. Head Start sponsored the development of four bilingual/multicultural preschool curricula that teach skills using these frameworks while reinforcing the language and culture of all the children being served. The four models allow for the diversity of the cultural and linguistic groups in different parts of the United States, as well as for the preferences of Head Start program providers. A list of these and other curricula are included in the resources at the end of this chapter.

As with other steps in the planning process, developing strategies and learning activities is best undertaken by the Education Coordinator with the assistance of staff and parents. Together they can proceed, using the following steps.

- Record the component goals and the objectives for meeting those goals on separate pieces of paper; leave enough space on each page for curriculum references and several strategies.
- Review each objective separately.
- Identify materials in the curriculum that address the objective; list strategies in the curriculum being adapted or in other resources; discuss how the activities noted relate to the objective.
- Discuss how the activities noted could be implemented in the program. Are additional steps needed?

- Record the steps discussed above in the order in which they will occur.
- For objectives where there is no reference in the curriculum or resource, discuss what tasks must be undertaken to achieve the objective. Record them in sequential order.

STEP SEVEN: IDENTIFY RESPONSIBILITIES, TIME LINES, DOCUMENTATION

The Education Plan should present a clear picture of the activities that will be conducted by the component. The "what" and "how" questions have been answered. To complete the planning process, the "when" and "who" questions must also be answered. This is accomplished by identifying time lines for the objectives and strategies and noting which staff members are responsible for completing specific tasks. (A sample from a completed Education Component Plan appears in the *Resource Papers*, III-3-4.)

It also is important to identify and describe the documentation to be maintained by the component. This documentation is evidence that the strategies have been completed and the objectives attained. It is used for self-assessment, evaluation, and tracking.

TIME LINES

To establish the time line, begin with the first objective. Review the strategies and note when in the year activities should take place:

- before the program starts;
- at the beginning of the year;
- at a specific point in the year; and/or
- ongoing.

Record realistic dates for each activity. No strategy can have a time line of "ongoing" only; each activity must have a beginning date. When activities have both beginning and ending dates (such as screening), both dates should be indicated.

Next, note which activities will be conducted simultaneously so that strategies can be coordinated. For example, the program could conduct a parent training needs assessment at about the same time as requesting suggestions for field trips (two strategies from two different objectives). Although different information is requested, one form can include both types of questions. This method is expedient as well as thrifty—one sheet of paper used, one mailing prepared, etc.

Likewise, coordination among components is important during this step. As time lines are being developed, inform other coordinators of the tasks to be undertaken by the Education Component and when these are to be completed. Potential conflicts will be identified and plans altered. This will not be as easy once the plan has been approved by the Policy Council/Committee and submitted for funding. Some Directors facilitate planning coordination by gathering all the coordinators together to develop an annual calendar of program activities.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

As time lines are being developed for the strategies and objectives, it is also necessary to determine who has operating responsibility for each activity—who will complete the task or activity. In most instances, the Education Coordinator will have the operating responsibility for the strategies concerning:

- plan development;
- curriculum adaptation or development;
- staff selection;
- staff and parent training; and
- establishing a safe and healthy learning environment.

Although the Education Coordinator has ultimate responsibility for every activity in the Education Component, the classroom staff and home visitors have operating responsibility for tasks such as:

- observing and recording children's growth and development;
- conducting home visits;
- maintaining or promoting a safe and healthy environment; and
- preparing weekly plans.

DOCUMENTATION TO BE MAINTAINED

Identify the documentation to be maintained within the Education Component, and indicate how it will be used within the strategy statements.

Written records include:

- minutes from parent and staff meetings;
- lesson plans and daily schedules;
- written curriculum;
- records of parent participation;
- individual plans, including data gathered as a result of ongoing observation, recording, and evaluating each individual child's growth and development;
- Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) for children with diagnosed handicapping conditions;
- staff and parent training plans; and
- records of parent meetings.

Documentation is also discussed in Chapter V, "Administering The Education Component."

STEP EIGHT: FINAL REVIEW PROCESS

A final review is necessary. This review includes checking to make sure all the Performance Standards have been addressed.

REVIEWING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT PLAN

Presenting the draft plan to the entire education staff will allow them to see what their responsibilities will entail for the upcoming program year. Staff may then point out what they feel can realistically be accomplished, what obstacles they see to completing some action steps, and how these obstacles could be overcome. They may also suggest changes or additions to the plan.

Next, present the plan to the Head Start Director for approval. A final review by other component coordinators also is invaluable. The staff meets to discuss the activities that will take place during the next program year.

The final step in the Grantee or Delegate Agency review process is approval by the Executive Director and the Policy Council/Committee. The agency will have a system for accomplishing this. In many programs component coordinators present their plans to the Executive Director and the Policy Council/Committee group agencies. A presentation by the Education Coordinator might address the following points:

- how the planning group was established and how it operated;
- what information from the Community Needs Assessment was used in preparing and updating the plan;
- whether the plan was reviewed, revised, updated, or completely rewritten;
- what information was used to recommend or validate program options;
- the underlying philosophy that guides the Education Component;
- how the goals and objectives were developed for the plan;
- how the curriculum was selected and adapted;
- what strategies and learning activities were developed to meet the goals and objectives; and
- who is responsible for completing each task and when the action steps will be implemented.

USING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT PLAN

Every center needs to have a copy of the plan to refer to regularly. Putting the plan in a three ring binder with tabs will make it easier to read and use. It can be used as a working document to meet a number of needs, including:

- developing systems and formats for the Education Component
  - daily schedules,
  - long-term plans,
  - weekly planning forms,
  - a system for observing, recording, and evaluating children's behavior, and
  - a system for ordering classroom supplies;
- guiding the ongoing planning and implementation of daily activities;
- developing other program documents;
- developing the training plan;
- providing orientation for new staff; and
- focusing discussion at staff meetings.

Two final uses for the Education Component Plan are discussed in the following sections of this chapter—developing the budget and staffing the component.

BUDGETING FOR THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

The extent of involvement by the Education Coordinator in budgeting for the component varies from program to program. In some programs, the Education Coordinator provides information for the budget, while in others the Education Coordinator assists the Director in preparing and overseeing the component budget. Whatever their level of involvement, component coordinators need to know how much money has been allocated for the services they provide.

When the annual budget for the program is prepared, the Director will outline the items included in the education portion. In the majority of programs, this will include:

- staff salaries;
- equipment, materials, and supplies for all program options;
- office supplies for education staff (if applicable);
- a staff development budget; and
- a tracking system for in-kind contributions.

In some programs, items like center rent, utilities, and maintenance also are included. If not, the Education Coordinator may recommend when maintenance is needed, e.g., painting a center or repairing a bathroom. In programs with a home-based option, staff travel is included in the budget. In other programs, there may be a line item for staff travel for home visits or to professional conferences. Some programs may be able to pay for such conferences; others may not.

ITEMS INCLUDED IN THE BUDGET

STAFF SALARIES

This is usually the largest budget item and includes salary and fringe benefits (social security, workmen's compensation, health and accident insurance, and retirement program).

CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT, MATERIALS, AND SUPPLIES

This is usually the second largest budget category. The materials reflect the program's educational philosophy and priorities and need to be selected carefully.

Staff appreciate being asked to provide input on what supplies and equipment they need. Their projections are based on an assessment of the condition of classroom and outdoor equipment and the consumable supplies used during the past year.

When determining what is needed for the Education Component, it is helpful to distinguish among these items:

- **Equipment**—tables, chairs, easels, cots, shelves, storage cabinets, water and sand tables, furniture for the housekeeping areas, large motor toys, sandboxes, climbing structures, tricycles, large wooden blocks, etc. These standard items are durable and not frequently replaced. They should be of good quality and designed for use with preschool children.
- **Materials**—usually includes toys, games, table blocks, table toys, puzzles, props for the housekeeping area, books, records, and science materials, such as magnifying glasses, etc. These are items that are replaced periodically—once or twice a year—but are not considered to be consumable items.
- **Supplies**—these are consumable items such as art supplies, tape, chalk, soap, paper products, etc. These need to be replaced regularly. Some programs include only items used directly by the children in the Education Component budget; other programs include teacher supplies, such as pens, notebooks, and index cards.

For the home-based option, the home visitor provides the special toys and materials needed to implement the child's plan. However, the home visitor is trying to demonstrate to the parent that children can learn from materials readily available in the home. Such things as buttons, beans, bottle tops, empty cartons, clothes pins, plastic bottles, etc. can be used to teach children to classify, seriate, and create.

CREATIVE BUDGETING

No program ever has all the funds it needs or wants for materials and classroom supplies. Many programs actively solicit contributions from the community. Here are some practical suggestions for supplementing the budget.

- Determine which items of equipment can be easily shared within the center or within the program, e.g., a record player can easily serve two classrooms or even three, with good planning; a water/sand table or a full set of large wooden blocks can do the same.
- Rotate certain materials throughout the classrooms on a routine basis instead of purchasing new ones; puzzles and table toys are ideal for this.
- Purchase art materials carefully; order the basics like crayons, paint, scissors, and glue; try to get local companies to donate computer paper for drawing, and ask parents to save "beautiful junk."
- Try to order all materials, equipment, and supplies in bulk so that discounts can be requested. This involves planning and coordination among classroom staff.
- Look for toy recycling centers that take donated used toys, refurbish them, and sell them at a very low price.
- Include classroom materials in fund-raising efforts. Request contributions from local stores on a rotating basis so that no store is constantly asked for donations.
- Encourage staff to use public libraries whenever possible to save the cost of purchasing books and records.

MONITORING THE EDUCATION BUDGET

Once the budget for the Education Component is prepared, the Education Coordinator monitors the expenditures, oversees fixed assets, keeps an inventory of supplies, and monitors nonconsumables, such as tables and chairs. This ensures that all costs incurred are within budget and helps determine if additional line items are needed.

It also helps to keep track of where money is being spent and whether staff members are conscious of saving money whenever possible. The staff needs to know details about the budget for their activities. In monitoring the budget it is helpful to keep these guidelines in mind.

- Require education staff to conduct periodic inventories. These will note what equipment, materials, and supplies are needed and which are being used more rapidly than the budget allows. (See the *Resource Papers*, III-5-8.)
- Develop a simple form for the staff to use when completing the inventory.
- Develop a system that records what each center is spending, when, and on what.
- Compare budget items with what is actually being spent to identify where over- or underspending is occurring before this becomes a problem.

Monitoring the budget can include encouraging staff to seek donated materials and in-kind contributions. Staff who are successful in soliciting donations can be asked to share their ideas and successes with others.

STAFFING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

The staff hired for the Education Component is the key to successful implementation of the Education Component Plan. Staff selected should subscribe to the Head Start philosophy and policies while contributing their own creativity and skill in working with preschool children.

In staffing the Education Component, the Director and Education Coordinator work closely with the Parent Involvement Coordinator to develop a system of involving the Policy Council/Committee in recruiting and selecting staff and volunteers. The Social Services and/or Volunteer Coordinator will also be helpful in identifying local sources of volunteers, e.g., foster grandparent programs or summer youth volunteer programs. It is strongly recommended that each program develop a written manual describing staff recruitment, screening, and selection procedures.

DETERMINING STAFFING NEEDS AND PATTERNS

Staff is recruited or selected in response to a clear statement of the program's needs. The total number of children in the program affects staffing most directly; there must be enough staff to comply with required state and local staff-child ratios. Operating the home-based option requires home visitors who can travel to the children's homes and, in many cases, work in the classroom as well. Large programs may have more than one Education Coordinator or an assistant Education Coordinator.

INVOLVING PARENTS IN THE STAFF SELECTION PROCESS

Head Start policy 70.2 clearly states that parents are to be given decision-making responsibilities within the program. One of the areas in which parents must have a role is in recruiting, screening, and selecting the staff.

In most programs, this requirement is satisfied by a personnel selection committee comprised of parents, the education staff, and in some cases, the Parent Involvement Coordinator. Parents can and should be involved in each of the tasks described in this section. They can serve on recruitment teams, help write job descriptions, help conduct reference checks, and participate in the interview process.

It is recommended that parents who participate in this process receive adequate training. They will become familiar with the criteria used in staff selection and learn how to conduct interviews and observe applicants as they interact with children and parents.

DEVELOPING JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The Education Plan includes a list of the staff categories for the component and job descriptions for each category. Job descriptions, which may be developed by the Director or the Education Cooordinator, should be finalized prior to recruiting and selecting staff. Clearly written job descriptions include:

- job title;
- a realistic description of job responsibilities, including supervisory duties;
- whether the job is full- or part-time, permanent or temporary;
- educational requirements;
- type and amount of previous experience required; and
- approximate salary range for the position.

The Education Component Plan may include job descriptions for each of these positions:

- Education Coordinator
- Head teachers/center directors
- Teachers
- Assistant teachers
- Home visitors
- Classroom volunteers

When developing job descriptions, begin by reviewing the Performance Standards and strategies for meeting them as defined in the Education Component Plan. Next, review the CDA competencies. Consider the following questions.

- What does the job consist of on a daily basis? in the classroom? in the home? in group socialization experiences? for the overall education program?
- What kind of qualifications are necessary to fulfill these duties? skills? prior experience?
- What kind of educational background is needed? an associate degree? bachelors degree in early childhood education? masters degree? high school diploma? CDA? CDA with bilingual specialization?
- Will this be a full-time job? Could it be a part-time job?
- What career advancement opportunities exist within this job category?
- What has been budgeted for this staff position? What is the salary range?
- Do all of the above criteria meet Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regulations, and the 1964 Civil Rights Act, as amended, and comply with Head Start Performance Standards?

RECRUITMENT

The Head Start Director works with the Education Coordinator to recruit education staff. Recruitment involves developing a procedure for advertising job vacancies within and outside of the program. All procedures must be open, competitive, and comply with Head Start regulations and EEOC requirements.

There are numerous ways in which job vacancies can be advertised:

- posting vacancy notices on center bulletin boards;
- sending copies of notices home with children;
- advertising in local newspapers or community newsletters;
- posting notices in neighborhood locations, such as libraries and grocery stores; and
- notifying the placement office at local colleges or universities.

Some programs develop job vacancy forms for advertising openings. The form includes job title, duties, location, salary range, education and experience requirements, how and where to apply, and the closing date for accepting applications.

When advertising positions, keep the program's career development plan in mind. Although priority in hiring is not automatically given to existing staff, those who are qualified to apply for a new position should be notified and their applications considered. Head Start parents must receive preference for employment as paraprofessionals.

DEVELOPING JOB APPLICATIONS

A good job application is based on the job description and includes questions that will help determine which applicants are appropriate. Job application forms should include the following general information.

- **Basic information**—applicant's name, address, phone number, social security number, and position applied for;
- **Education**—where applicant attended school; degree(s) earned and when; major and minor, and types of certificates held (e.g., CDA);
- **Prior work experience**—names and addresses of former employers; jobs held, dates, and salaries; immediate supervisor and primary responsibilities for each job listed; and
- **References**—names, addresses, and phone numbers for at least three personal and three professional references (not friends and relatives).

Many programs find it helpful to include a series of questions on the application form that encourage the applicant to express his/her views about early childhood education and Head Start. Such questions can elicit information about the applicant's attitudes, abilities, skills, and interest in training and the answers provide writing samples for job categories that require writing skills. The following questions are examples that might be included in job application forms for education staff.

- What do you feel is the most important aspect of preschool experiences for young children?
- What are some of the values of play for young children?
- What are the benefits of parent participation in the program?
- Give an example of how you would involve parents in your Head Start classroom.

SCREENING APPLICANTS

Screening ensures that only applicants who meet all eligibility criteria are called in for interviews. It involves checking each applicant's credentials against the job qualifications to determine eligibility for the position. At a minimum, two questions should be addressed: (1) Does the applicant meet the educational and professional requirements for the job? and (2) Are all portions of the job application form complete, consistent, and accurate? Further research is advised if there is an unexplained gap in the applicant's work history, the application is incomplete, or if the information provided doesn't make sense.

In many programs, the personnel selection committee screens the applications. In other programs, applications are initially screened by the grantee or delegate agency personnel office. All eligible applications are then sent to the selection committee.

An important part of the Education Coordinator's role in staff screening and selection is to provide guidance to the members of the committee about what to look for when hiring. The committee can review the applications together, or participate in a formal training session during which the recruitment, screening, and selection process is described and criteria for staff are discussed.

INTERVIEWING, OBSERVING, AND CHECKING REFERENCES

Once the initial screening has been completed, candidates are interviewed and observed working with children and parents. Before presenting the final candidates to the Policy Council/Committee for approval, candidates' references and records are checked.

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

The following are recommendations for conducting the interview.[2]

- Prepare candidates for the interview by giving them an overview of the interview process and the topics that will be discussed.
- Pay attention to their personal appearance, speech, and ability to express themselves.
- Encourage candidates to talk; avoid questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no."
- Ask each candidate the same questions in the same order. (This makes it easier to record the answers and compare them later on.)
- Clarify any questions about why candidates left previous jobs or why there are gaps in employment history.
- Try to get an impression of temperament. How do they react to difficult questions? Do they display a sense of humor?
- Consider using written questions to which the candidates must write a response. This can be done at the end of the interview; e.g., give them typical classroom situations and ask them to respond.
- Use a written rating system to facilitate agreement on which candidates should be given further consideration.

When developing interview questions, review the job description for the position; the questions should match the job description and elicit responses that help determine the qualifications of the candidate. Suggested categories and sample questions are described below.

Basic Philosophy and Attitudes

- What qualities do you feel are important in adults who work with young children and their families?
- What experiences do you feel are important for young children?
- How do you feel about involving parents in your classroom?
- What is the role of play in child development?

Planning Classroom Activities

- How does the physical environment affect how and what children learn?
- What do you think is important about written weekly plans? Why?
- How do your weekly plans address the individual developmental needs of young children?

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[2] Adapted from materials developed by the Fairfax Public Schools Head Start Program, Fairfax, Virginia, and from National Child Day Care Association, Washington, DC.

- What opportunities for learning exist at meal time?

Classroom Management and Relationships

- How do you handle transition times in the daily schedule?
- How would you work with a child who has frequent fights with other children?
- How would you work with a child who is shy and withdrawn?
- What would you say to a child who cries every day when his parent leaves the center?

Working with Parents and Staff

- How would you involve parents in your program?
- How do you feel about going into people's homes?
- What is the value of having volunteers and assistants working with you in the classroom?
- What kinds of supervisory experience have you had? Describe your approach to supervision.

Questions for Head Teachers and Center Directors

- Which supervision techniques do you find most effective?
- How would you help staff to prepare weekly plans?
- What techniques would you use to help education staff become better teachers or home visitors?
- What are some of the ways that you would involve parents in the program?
- What would you do if you came to work on Monday morning and one of the classrooms was flooded, two staff members were out sick, one child was having a temper tantrum, and your monthly reports were due by the end of the day?[3]

OBSERVING THE CANDIDATES IN THE CLASSROOM

It is strongly recommended that the interview process include a classroom observation of approximately 45 minutes to one hour, so that the candidates' behavior with children, parents, and staff, their overall manner, and skills can be observed. Candidates may also be asked to carry out an activity they have planned. If so, they will need to know about this prior to the observation.

It is important to remember that some candidates may be anxious about the observation. It is helpful to allow them to spend some time, e.g., half an hour, with the children, parents, and staff in the classroom prior to the observation. Following the observation, allot time for both the candidate and observer to ask questions.

When a candidate is interacting with the children, the interviewers/observers position themselves inconspicuously in the classroom and note the candidate's performance. Questions to guide the observation are provided below.[4]

During the observation, does the candidate:

- observe what children are doing and ask questions that promote children's thinking?
- demonstrate a sense of humor?
- listen to what the children have to say and respond to their questions?
- show interest, enthusiasm, warmth, and patience in working with children?
- speak positively and give clear directions?
- show a willingness to participate in activities including messy ones or those requiring sitting with the children?
- have the physical stamina necessary to work with young children?
- enhance and foster children's positive self-image through supportive adult/child interactions?

Allow time after the observation to talk with candidates about their perceptions of the program and to respond to any questions. What candidates have to say about the program and the questions they ask can provide added insight into their abilities and attitudes.

It is important to carry out the staff selection and recruitment process in a professional and thoughtful manner. Potential staff members are observing the program, often for the first time, as closely as they are being observed. Their decision about working in the program can be affected by the screening and interviewing procedures.

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[3] These questions were partly adapted from *Center Training Guide: Cuyahoga County Child Enrichment Program*, (Atlanta, GA: TAPP Associates) and from National Child Day Care Association materials, (Washington, DC).

[4] Adapted from *Center Training Guide: Cuyahoga County Child Enrichment Program* (Atlanta, GA: TAPP Associates).

CHECKING REFERENCES

Reference checks are important and should be done carefully. Too often, they become mechanical, and give little information about the applicants. With the current concerns about sexual abuse in child care programs, it is even more important to carefully check references.

A candidate's references can be a valuable source of information about the person's prior work experience, attitudes toward children, ability to work with parents, and general work-related skills. The key is to ask the right questions. In addition, the grantee or delegate agency or state laws may require a check of all available public records regarding evidence of child abuse, child sexual abuse, or child neglect by the candidate. Check with the Director for the current requirements for background checks.

Questions should elicit information about the candidate's skills, attitudes, and abilities. Avoid those with "yes" or "no" answers. The goal is to engage the reference in a conversation about the applicant that will give a picture of what type of person the candidate is and what skills he/she has.

For **professional references** these questions might be asked.

- When and where have you observed the candidate working with young children?
- What skills does he/she demonstrate in working with young children?
- How long did the candidate work with you? Why did he/she leave? Who was his/her immediate supervisor?
- How well does the candidate communicate ideas and opinions to others?
- How does the candidate handle frustration and criticism?
- Is the candidate dependable? mature? reliable? Please give examples of situations you have observed that help you answer this question.
- How does the candidate demonstrate a willingness to increase his/her skills?
- How does the candidate work with parents and other staff?

For **personal references**, these questions apply.

- How long have you known the candidate?
- In what capacity do you know the candidate?
- Where and when have you observed him/her with young children?
- What skills do you feel he/she demonstrates in working with young children?
- How does the candidate respond in stressful situations?
- To your knowledge, has the applicant had any legal convictions? If so, what are they?

One note of caution: it is advisable to consult an attorney or the regional office to be sure the questions asked do not violate an applicant's civil rights.

FINAL SELECTION AND HIRING[5]

The final selection should be based on judgments about each candidate's qualifications, references and record checks and the results of the interview, and observation. The personnel committee, or other group of interviewers, presents their recommendations to the Policy Council/ Committee for approval. Once approved, the successful candidate should be notified. Unsuccessful candidates should be notified after the chosen candidate has accepted. There should then be an official announcement of the selection.

If unsuccessful candidates wish to know why they were not selected, the program should be prepared to justify its decision and refer to the documentation of selection procedures in showing why the candidate who was selected was deemed the best qualified.

Many programs establish a probationary or trial period for new employees. This is particularly advisable when it has not been possible to observe the new employee working with children. The probationary period should always be of fixed duration (e.g., three months) and the new employee should be told about it before he/she accepts the job.

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[5] Adapted from *Recruitment and Selection of Staff: A Guide for Managers of Preschool and Child Care Programs* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1985), p. 3.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL PLANNING

- Work with parents and staff to develop, review, revise, or update the Education Component Plan. The participatory management process is as important as the final product.
- Refer to the plan regularly, distribute copies to the staff, and use the plan as a working document for program implementation.
- Maintain a commitment to the Head Start philosophy, goals, and objectives and find ways to promote staff and parent understanding of these principles.
- Carefully budget funds for the Education Component throughout the year. Avoid running out of money or failing to make use of the program's resources.
- Select staff who understand and believe in Head Start's philosophy, goals, and objectives.

RESOURCES

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Arenas, Soledad. "Innovations in Bilingual/Multicultural Curriculum Development." *Children Today*, May/June 1980. Head Start Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013.

This article provides background informaton for designing a preschool curriculum that fosters the development of a group of children from diverse cultural and language backgrounds. Included are the general requirements for the four bilingual/multicultural curriculum models developed for ACYF and brief descriptions of each model.

Pokorni, Judith. *Program Planning Guide*. Head Start Resource and Training Center, 4321 Hartwick Road, L-220, College Park, MD 20740. 1979. $10.00.

This is a guide to developing written plans for Head Start administrators and component coordinators. It is a participatory management guide for analyzing the needs of the community alongside Performance Standards goals and objectives.

Pokorni, Judith. *Program Planning and Beyond*. Head Start Resource and Training Center, 4321 Hartwick Road, L-220, College Park, MD 20740. 1981. $12.00.

This sequel to the *Program Planning Guide* addresses all three management functions: planning, implementation, and evaluation. It includes the community needs assessment, cross-component planning, and the development of functional strategies.

CURRICULUM RESOURCES

Carolina Developmental Curriculum: Structured Learning Activities, Ages 3-6. Walker Educational Book Co., 720 Fifth Avenue, NY, NY 10019. 1980. $98.50 for three-volume set. Individual volumes also available.

The information included in the three volumes is organized as follows: Activities in Gross Motor, Fine Motor, and Visual Perception; Activities in Reasoning, Receptive Language, and Expressive Language; and Activities in Social-Emotional Development.

Cherry, Clare. *The Early Childhood Library*. Pitman Learning, Inc., 1020 Plain St., Marshfield, MA 02050.

- *Creative Art for the Developing Child: A Teacher's Handbook for Early Childhood Education*. 1972. $8.95.

  This book addresses ways in which creative art becomes developmental art. The program is self-starting and self-pacing; goals are directed toward academic and personal advancement.

- *Creative Play for the Developing Child*. 1976. $11.95.

  Creative Play is a comprehensive presentation of the value of play activities of children in a nursery school setting. Emphasis is on the physical and intellectual benefits of all forms of play.

- *Creative Movement for the Developing Child*. 1971. $5.95.

  Creative Movement is a total program of rhythmic activities for preschool children. It includes more than 200 goal-directed activities as well as singing and listening materials.

Creative Associates, Inc. *The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood*. P.D. Press, Creative Associates, Inc., 3201 New Mexico Avenue, NW, Suite 270, Washington, DC 20016. 1979. $59.55 plus postage and handling for nine-volume set. Individual volumes also available.

This comprehensive curriculum provides both practical and theoretical information on four major areas of early childhood education: blocks, art, table toys, and the house corner. The nine-volume curriculum package includes a teacher's manual and trainer's guide for each of the four areas and a resource materials manual. The curriculum stresses the children's use of materials and teacher-child interaction.

Hohmann, Mary; Banet, Bernard; and Weikart, David. *Young Children in Action: A Manual for Preschool Educators*. The High Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 N. River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48195. 1979. $15.00.

This two-part, cognitively oriented curriculum, which is based on Jean Piaget's findings on the developmental stages of children, centers around the theme that children learn through active encounters with reality. The teacher's primary goal is to promote this active learning. Part I discusses the administrative aspects of classroom management; Part II describes key experiences for cognitive development. Suggestions on how the curriculum can be adapted for bilingual/multicultural programs and for children with special needs are also included.

Portage Guide to Early Education. Portage Project, CESA 12, Box 564, Portage, WI 53901.

This curriculum was developed to serve as a guide to teachers and others who need to assess a child's behavior and plan realistic curriculum goals that lead to additional skills. Package includes a developmental checklist, a card file of activities, and an instruction booklet.

BILINGUAL/MULTICULTURAL CURRICULUM MODELS

ACYF funded the development of these four curriculum models specifically for use in the Head Start Program.

High/Scope Educational Research Foundation. *Un Marco Abierto*. High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, 600 N. River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. $300—Complete set to include a text, 9 cassette tapes and 7 filmstrips. Text is available for $25.00.

This curriculum is based on High Scope's Young Children in Action Curriculum and is cognitively oriented, child centered, and experience oriented. This model emphasizes the importance of providing opportunities for the child to become directly involved with other people, objects, and situations. It also provides teachers with recommended strategies for recognizing the unique attributes of each child and his or her family and community, and providing a classroom environment that reflects the child's culture and environment, invites the child to become actively involved in learning, and encourages each child to plan and make decisions.

Aspects of cultural learning are viewed as integral parts of the child's everyday classroom experience. Members of the children's families and communities are directly involved in classroom activities, and field trips are used to expand the children's culture base. This program incorporates the natural approach to language learning, integrating it with ongoing activities, rather than presented or developed through a set of specified language lessons.

Intercultural Development Research Association. *Nuevo Amanecer*. Lincolnwood, IL: National Textbook Co., 4255 West Touhy Avenue, Lincolnwood, IL 60646. 1985. $103.95.

The AMANECER model views learning as a continuous process in which children's experiences are used as the basis for helping them gather more information about themselves, other people, objects, and events. Rather than prescribe exactly what activities should be conducted, and how, when, and for whom, AMANECER provides teachers with basic information, guiding principles, and steps needed to make specific decisions about the learning environment and the activities used to incorporate culture into the classroom. A second language is introduced only after concepts or ideas have been mastered in the child's stronger, first language. The second language is then applied to ideas, events, or situations already familiar to the child. The four-volume package includes a Teacher's Reference Book, a Learning Center Idea Book, a Circle Time Activity Book, and a Master Sheet Book.

Nuevas Fronteras de Aprendizaje. Pergamon Press, Inc., Maxwell House, Fairfiew Park, Elmsford, NY 10523. Complete set—$636. Individual volumes are also available.

This model acknowledges that cultural backgrounds and individual experiences influence the cognitive styles children prefer to use. The bicultural goal of the model is addressed through the cultural content of the program, the main thrust of which is using a variety of songs, stories, games, and other activities that reflect elements of Mexican and Mexican-American culture. Biculturalism is also reflected in and enhanced by the model's approach to language development, which gives first priority to extending and developing the child's home or primary language. This program provides informal as well as more structured experiences that assist the child in acquiring and gaining competence in his or her second language.

Williams, Leslie R., and Degaetano, Yvonne. *Alerta: A Multicultural, Bilingual Approach to Teaching Young Children*. Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Jacob Way, Reading, MA 01867. $21.00.

ALERTA is a comprehensive, developmental model based on two major principles or beliefs concerning child growth and development: that growth occurs in each individual as he or she is impelled to engage in more and more complex ways of thinking, feeling, and acting; and that the total environment (including home, family, and community as well as the classroom setting) plays a crucial role in a child's growth.

The model focuses on helping each child achieve the maximum degree of bilingualism possible in view of his or her prior language experiences, length of time in the program, and amount of exposure to a second language outside the classroom. The model uses informal learning opportunities, as well as planned, teacher-directed activities with small groups of children to promote language acquisition and development. The ALERTA model recognizes, values, and builds on the unique language and cultural experiences of each child.

CURRICULUM RESOURCES—HOME-BASED OPTION

Building Families: A Training Manual for Home-Based Head Start. 75 South 400 West, Logan, UT. 84321. $4.00.

This manual for teachers or home visitors contains "how-to" information about home visits. It includes information on the philosophy, recruitment, planning, and implementation of home visits, record keeping, and supervision, and assists the teacher or home visitor in developing parent-focused, home-based programs.

Home Grown. ARVAC, Inc., P.O. Box 2110, Russellville, AR 72801.

This curriculum for parents and Head Start home visitors provides information to assist in the preparation for home visits. It is a full curriculum with goals and themes. Parents can use materials as a follow-up to the home visits.

Home Start Curriculum Guide. Bear River Head Start, 75 South 400 West, Logan, UT 84321. $7.50 per copy, includes postage and handling.

This guide is for staff and parents to use in a home-based setting. It is a developmental curriculum of units by topic that considers seasons of the year and holidays. It contains unit justifications, objectives, activities, and a parent guide. An appendix of recipes, art activities, songs, and stories also is included.

On Your Mark—Get Set—Go (An Orientation Process for New Home Visitors). Head Start Training Center, 925 24th Street, Parkersburg, VA 26101. $5.50, plus $2.50 handling.

Written for the supervisors of home visitors, this booklet addresses the question of how to introduce new home visitors to the Head Start program. Materials for the complete 3-week orientation process include information on the Head Start program and its policies, home visitor roles and responsibilities, and steps in planning and making a home visit.

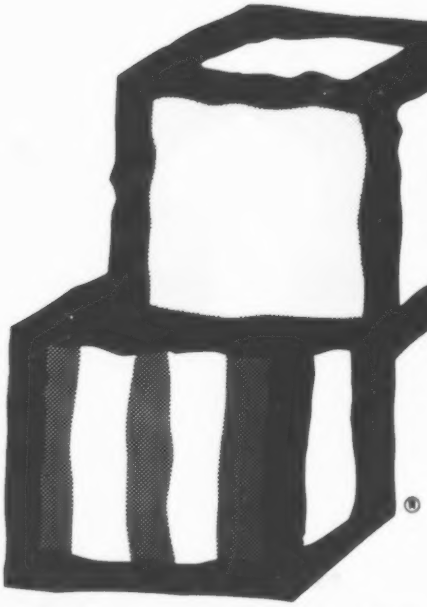
Together, We Can. Resources for Children, Youth and Families; Child and Family Development Program. Nebraska Panhandle Community Action Agency, P.O. Box 1469, Scottsbluff, NE 69361. $6.50—Reg. VII; $8.50—other Head Start employees or programs; $10.00—all others. Postage and handling not included. (Will be available in Spanish soon.)

This publication presents a full year's curriculum for preschool children and their parents, has a strong emphasis on incidental learning and teaching through everyday interactions of parents and children. The curriculum is based on the CDA competencies for home visitors.

Wolf, Barbara, and Herwig, Julia. *The Head Start Home Visitor Handbook*. Portage Project, CES A 5, Portage, WI 53901. 1986.

This handbook was developed to help the home visitor build an effective home-based program for Head Start children and their families. It is intended to serve as a blueprint for parent-focused home visits that help the child and family realize their full potential.

IV. Implementing the Education Component Plan



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- Promoting a commitment to and understanding of the Education Component Plan among education staff.
- Providing and/or arranging for training on the curriculum.
- Assisting staff in designing and/or using a learning environment that supports the curriculum.
- Selecting the equipment and materials for component activities with the staff.
- Reviewing schedules and helping the staff achieve a balance of activities in the classroom.
- Clarifying the role of discipline and helping staff develop skills in promoting self-control and a positive self-image in each child.
- Ensuring that staff observe and record children's behavior and activities on a daily basis and use this information to individualize the program.
- Reviewing weekly plans of the classroom staff and home visitors to ensure that they reflect an understanding of the curriculum, individualization, and coordination with other components.
- Assisting the Parent Involvement Coordinator in planning and/or conducting training for parents.
- Promoting the meaningful involvement of parents in planning the curriculum and helping in the classroom.
- Enhancing the skills of staff in communicating and working with parents.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Review those aspects of the Education Component Plan that relate to the daily program.
- Collect and review any forms used to assess the center or home-based options.
- Review memos and materials sent to the staff related to the daily program, e.g., discipline approaches, schedules, activities, field trip guidelines, etc.
- Review program evaluation results.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: IMPLEMENTING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT PLAN

	Yes	Needs My Attention
OVERSEEING AND SUPPORTING THE DAILY PROGRAM		
1. Does the staff understand the Education Component Plan and how to implement it?	____	____
2. Do I have a system for overseeing the daily program?	____	____
INDIVIDUALIZING THE PROGRAM		
3. Does the staff know how to observe and record children's behavior in order to plan individualized activities?	____	____
4. Do I monitor individualization when visiting centers and home-based settings?	____	____
THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT		
5. Do I assess the physical environment when I visit classrooms?	____	____
6. Do the teachers understand how children's behavior is affected by the physical environment?	____	____
7. Do I help teachers rearrange their classrooms?	____	____
8. Do I help home visitors make constructive suggestions to parents at home?	____	____
MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT		
9. Have I given teachers and home visitors guidelines for selecting materials and equipment?	____	____
10. Have I set standards for the display of materials?	____	____
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS		
11. Do I know how to determine whether the staff is in control of the classrooms?	____	____
12. Are the weekly schedules well planned and balanced?	____	____
13. Do the rules the staff has established in each classroom reflect the Head Start goals and objectives?	____	____
14. Have I effectively conveyed how to use positive discipline techniques?	____	____

	Yes	Needs My Attention
PLANNING: PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER		
15. Have I set clear standards for long-term and weekly planning?	____	____
16. Does the staff use the curriculum and information about individual children to develop plans?	____	____
DEVELOPING LINKAGES WITH THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS		
17. Do I foster ongoing linkages with public school administrators?	____	____
18. Do I foster an ongoing relationship with elementary school staff?	____	____
19. Do teachers help children make the transition to elementary school?	____	____
INVOLVING PARENTS IN THE PROGRAM		
20. Am I satisfied with the quality of communication between staff and parents?	____	____
21. Are home visits well planned and implemented?	____	____
22. Are parents involved in planning the program?	____	____

Review your responses, especially those you marked "Needs My Attention," and circle those topics you want to work on. List them below in order of their importance to you.

____

____

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OVERSEEING AND SUPPORTING THE DAILY PROGRAM

How does a piece of paper containing the Education Component Plan become the program that takes place in the center and the children's homes? Although the program of activities is planned and conducted by the education staff, the Education Coordinator is ultimately responsible for ensuring that the activities conform to the philosophy, objectives, and strategies outlined in the Education Component Plan. These aspects of the plan define the program's curriculum.

Successful implementation of the Education Component Plan depends on two important assumptions.

- The Education Coordinator agrees with and is committed to the philosophy, goals and objectives, and approach to teaching and learning outlined in the plan.
- The Head Start Director and education staff—teachers, assistant teachers, home visitors, volunteers, and parents—share the same vision.

An Education Coordinator who has questions about the Education Component Plan is likely to give mixed signals in performing the tasks required to implement and oversee the daily program. A teacher who does not agree with the philosophy and goals of the program may resist training and guidance. For example, imagine asking a teacher who doesn't believe in bilingual education to implement the Alerta Curriculum. Or, imagine asking a home visitor who believes that parents should give children frequent spankings to teach positive discipline techniques. Commitment to the plan and a shared vision of what the program wants children and families to achieve are essential.

A COMMITMENT TO THE PLAN

How does an Education Coordinator ensure that the Education Component Plan is still relevant and that the staff understands and supports the Head Start philosophy outlined in the plan? At the beginning of a new Head Start year, it is wise to review the Education Component Plan with the following questions in mind.

- When was the plan last reviewed and updated?
- What staff members and parents were involved in updating or reviewing the plan?
- Can I stand behind everything that is in the plan?
- Is something missing?
- Should anything be changed?

Assuming that the plan reflects the current needs of the community and that the Education Coordinator agrees with and supports the plan, the next step is to ensure that the staff shares the same commitment. Some strategies for enhancing a shared vision include:

- involving staff members and parents in developing/updating the Education Component Plan (see Chapter III);
- offering training and opportunities for discussion to ensure a common understanding and agreement on philosophy and approach, and to enhance the staff's competence in implementing the plan (see Chapter VII);
- defining clear expectations in each job description, tying responsibilities to the Education Component Plan so that staff members know what they are expected to do (see Chapter VI); and
- developing a system for overseeing the daily program and providing the staff with feedback and support.

A SYSTEM FOR OVERSEEING THE DAILY PROGRAM

Education Coordinators who are systematic in facilitating the daily program tend to have a clear idea of what areas they need to address, what strategies they will use to facilitate implementation of the plan, and how they will support the staff.

AREAS THAT NEED TO BE SUPPORTED

A careful reading of the Education Component Plan reveals several areas that Education Coordinators should observe and be prepared to offer support in when visiting classrooms and home-based settings. These areas include:

- **individualization**, the on-going observation, recording, and evaluation of each child's growth and development for the purpose of planning activities to meet individual needs;

- the **physical environment** created by the staff in the centers or used by staff in the home;
- the availability of **equipment and materials**;
- **classroom management**, including the daily schedule, handling transitions, and discipline;
- **planning**, the long-term and weekly plans developed by the staff to meet individual needs and to ensure integration of the educational aspects of each component;
- **linkages with elementary schools**, the relationships established with administrators and local elementary school staff to ensure a smooth transition; and
- **parent involvement**, the meaningful involvement of parents in the daily program of component activities.

STRATEGIES FOR FACILITATING IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION PLAN

The best way to facilitate implementation of the Education Component Plan is to spend time regularly in the classroom and on home visits. These periodic visits are essential to the role of the Education Coordinator. The Education Coordinator's presence and participation validates what the staff is doing, allows for recognition, and provides the best opportunities for training and guidance. When the staff has a problem or issue, the Education Coordinator can serve as a sounding board, bringing a fresh perspective and new insights.

The amount of time an Education Coordinator spends in a given center or on home visits will vary. Education Coordinators are likely to spend more time with a new staff member or one who needs assistance than with a teacher or home visitor who is experienced and who has demonstrated skill in implementing the curriculum. Program size should not be a factor in determining how often an Education Coordinator visits a center or goes on a home visit. If the program is large, an additional staff member would be needed to ensure that the center-based staff receive a visit at least twice a month.

In organizing their work schedule to allow time to oversee implementation of the Education Component Plan, Education Coordinators might do the following.

- Prepare a schedule for visiting classrooms or making home visits and share this schedule with other component coordinators and the staff. The schedule serves as a commitment to make these visits. In addition, the Education Coordinator can make surprise visits to the classroom from time to time to ensure that what was observed during the planned visit is characteristic of the daily program.
- Identify which aspects of the program will be observed. Preparation for a visit ensures that the time will be well spent and the observation will be focused and purposeful.
- Prepare assessment strategies such as checklists to be used during the visit to ensure that the observation is purposeful and comprehensive. Know exactly what to look for.

STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORTING THE STAFF

Because the staff is responsible for implementing the Education Component Plan, the Education Coordinator acts as a facilitator and supporter to ensure that the activities are consistent with the curriculum and that staff has the skills and knowledge required to achieve the goals and objectives defined in the plan.

Strategies for facilitating the role of teachers and home visitors in implementing the Education Component Plan include:

- ensuring that all staff members have a copy of the Education Component Plan;
- planning and providing orientation training for new staff members to familiarize them with the Education Component Plan and to promote a common understanding;
- collecting and/or preparing materials that will help the staff understand the curriculum;
- offering and soliciting new ideas and activities through a newsletter, workshops, memos, or staff meetings to enrich the curriculum and give the staff a fresh approach;
- modeling effective techniques;
- giving immediate feedback on observations so the staff knows when they are on course and where they need to improve;
- recognizing accomplishments and sharing them with other staff members;
- allowing time after a visit to provide guidance and support and to talk about problems or issues that concern staff; and
- encouraging questions and discussions.

This chapter offers suggestions on what Education Coordinators should look for in overseeing the implementation of the Education Component Plan. It focuses primarily on the center-based option, although the information often applies to the home-based option as well. Other resources are available that focus specifically on the home-based option. (See the resource list in Chapter III.)

INDIVIDUALIZING THE PROGRAM

Individualizing is a program requirement. The Performance Standards clearly state that:

> *The education services component of the plan shall provide procedures for ongoing observation, recording, and evaluation of each child's growth and development for the purpose of planning activities to suit individual needs* (1304.2-2d).

To meet this requirement, Education Coordinators must ensure that the program has established ongoing procedures for assessing each child's growth and level of development, that the education staff knows how to implement these procedures, and that the staff uses the information in planning activities to promote each child's growth and to continually evaluate each child's progress.

WHY INDIVIDUALIZE THE PROGRAM?

Individualizing is basic to the comprehensive child development philosophy of Head Start. Because children develop at different rates, teachers and home visitors know that they can't expect every child to achieve the same skills and to learn new concepts at a given period of time. In any group of preschool children, some children will be able to use scissors and some won't; some children will express their ideas verbally and some will have a limited vocabulary; some will be scribbling and others will be making representational drawings; some children will use the props in the house corner to role play experiences they have had and others will use the props simply as toys. Staff must be able to recognize and allow for these differences in development when planning activities so that there is sufficient variety to meet the needs and interests of each child.

Children not only have unique patterns of development, they also come to Head Start with their own interests, experiences, and learning styles. Some children love to play with cars; others prefer expressing their ideas through art materials. Some are fascinated by fire engines and all sorts of large motor vehicles; others may not have one major interest but will be responsive to whatever new materials and experiences are offered. Individualizing means knowing each child's preferences and interests, using this information to create a learning environment appropriate for each child, and planning daily activities that build on each child's interests to promote individual growth.

Individualizing is one of the best strategies for promoting positive behavior. Children who are interested in the activities offered and who are appropriately challenged, rarely misbehave. When children are bored or frustrated, behavior problems are more likely to occur.

COORDINATING WITH OTHER COMPONENTS

Each component in the Head Start program seeks information on the children and their families that can be invaluable to education component staff. Rather than duplicating the process of obtaining this information by asking parents the same questions at enrollment, in a home visit, and in screening children, all coordinators in the program should be aware of what information is gathered in other components so that everyone can benefit from this knowledge and perspective. Regular meetings of component coordinators are one way to promote good communication and information sharing. Education Coordinators can also facilitate communication between other coordinators and education staff by arranging meetings and regular visits at each center and by periodically having coordinators accompany home visitors on their rounds.

Information obtained by other components that can be especially helpful to education staff in individualizing the program can be found in the forms maintained by social service staff, the health records, the results of screening conducted by the health component staff, documentation of child and family nutrition habits, and the records maintained by parent involvement staff.

SOCIAL SERVICES

Social services staff is responsible for recruitment of eligible children, including handicapped children. Once a child is enrolled, the staff maintains contact with the family to assess and reassess family needs and to develop a plan for needed services. Staff ensures that records of up-to-date, pertinent family data are kept for each family including *"completed enrollment forms, referral and fol-*

low-up reports, reports of contacts with other agencies, and reports of contacts with families'' (Performance Standards, 1304.4-2).

HEALTH

Initial information on each child comes from the screening conducted after a child has been enrolled in the program.

> *Medical and dental history, screening, and examinations.*
>
> *(a) The health services component of the performance standards plan shall provide that for each child enrolled in the Head Start program a complete medical, dental, and developmental history will be obtained and recorded, a thorough health screening will be given, and medical and dental examinations will be performed.* (1304.3-3.)

Education staff can be of great assistance to health staff in identifying children with potential health problems because they see the children for a greater period of time and have a basis for comparing behavior. The individual health records maintained on each child provide information useful in planning an educational program suited to the individual child. (See the Child Health Record in the *Resource Papers*, IV-1-4.)

In addition, mental health staff are required to ''*periodically observe children and consult with teachers and other staff*'' (Performance Standards, 1304.3-8). Education staff who are concerned about a child's development can benefit from the perspective of a professional outside observer in order to gain a better understanding of the child and what support is needed.

NUTRITION

Staff in the nutrition component obtains ''*information about family eating habits and special dietary needs and feeding problems, especially of handicapped children*'' (Performance Standards, 1304.3-10). Education staff who eat with the children daily should have access to this information.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parent involvement staff are charged with establishing and maintaining ongoing contact with parents to ensure their active involvement in the program and to support their role as primary educators of their children. Through home visits, phone contacts, conferences, and meetings, parent involvement staff gains broader understanding of each child's family, their involvement in the program, and how the education program can more effectively meet individual needs.

ASSESSING CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS, NEEDS, AND INTERESTS

The Performance Standards require the systematic gathering of information in order to determine children's level of development. Developmental assessment is one way of gaining this information in a systematic way. The purpose for gathering this information is to plan the daily program of activities and to create a learning environment appropriate for each child.

Developmental assessment is **child-centered** assessment. It is designed to find out both the strengths and needs of a young child, not just areas of deficiency or handicap. It is concerned with the individual child's abilities in relation to the sequence of development, not the child's standing in relation to other children.

Developmental assessment is **multidimensional**. It recognizes that a child grows in many important ways in the early years. Development in one area is related to the child's development in other areas. It is important to look at each child's overall level of development as well as growth in separate key areas.

Developmental assessment is **activity-centered**. It yields information useful to education staff as they plan the program for the group and for individual children. The results are not meant to be stashed away in a folder in a file drawer and forgotten, but to be used on an ongoing basis by the teacher.

Procedures used in developmental assessment reflect the fact that young children are often more difficult to test than older children and adults. Special techniques are needed to truly understand their abilities. Thus, programs use a variety of approaches for obtaining information on each child's development and interests. The Performance Standards **do not require** that a particular strategy, instrument, or observation procedure be used. However, whatever assessment procedures are used should conform to sound early childhood practice. Generally, programs use a developmental checklist or an instrument in the beginning of the year to obtain comprehensive information on each child. Informal assessment should be an ongoing part of the daily program.

In both informal and formal assessment, activities or tasks are designed to assess a child's abilities in each of the following areas:

- gross motor development (running, throwing, climbing);
- fine motor development (writing, grasping, cutting);

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- perceptual skills (discrimination between figure and ground, similarities and differences, spatial relations);
- cognitive skills (classification, memory, reasoning);
- socioemotional development (interactions with adults, siblings, and peers; feelings of self-worth);
- self-help skills (toileting, feeding, dressing);
- expressive language (the ability to communicate needs, ideas, and desires to others in an intelligible way); and
- receptive language (understanding what is heard, following directions, answering questions).

The most commonly used strategies for determining a child's level of development are informal and ongoing observation and recording.

INFORMAL ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Informal techniques are defined as systematic staff observations of children in a natural setting—their home or the center. The observation or activity is structured by the staff for the purpose of determining a child's level of development. Because it takes place in the child's normal setting (as opposed to a separate room where a test is administered), these techniques do not disrupt the daily program or create anxiety. Equally important, the results tend to be reliable. Most child development experts agree that the best assessments of young children result from observing them *in context*. Examples of informal assessment strategies are described below.

Developmental checklists, consistent with the program's goals and objectives, give staff a quick way to assess what skills or concepts children have learned, how often a child engages in a particular activity, and what areas or activities the child prefers and which ones the child avoids. Depending on the information sought, a checklist can be developed by the staff and kept in a convenient place so that notations can be made as staff observe children during the daily program and after the children have left for the day.

Structured activities can be designed as part of the daily plan for the expressed purpose of observing children and assessing their level of development. For example, colored blocks might be put out and used to determine if children can imitate a pyramid built by the teacher or home visitor. A checklist is kept to record each child's performance.

Sample forms for recording and organizing information obtained through informal assessments are included in the *Resource Papers* (IV-5-14).

ONGOING OBSERVATION AND RECORDING

The staff's ability to observe children on a regular basis, to note significant behavior, to record these observations, and to gather information and insights from parents is a critical factor in individualizing the program. What happens every day in the classroom or at home provides staff members with valuable insight and information.

The subtleties and quality of a child's interactions can be readily observed in the classroom or home. Over time, observation techniques reveal the progress of a child's development, patterns of behavior, and learning styles. Children communicate in many ways, including verbal language, eye contact, body language, mood, gesture, energy level, etc. For instance, in observing a child, staff might look for the following.

- Is the child able to hold a crayon and use it firmly?
- How loud or soft does the child speak? Does this differ throughout the day? Is the child's posture rigid or floppy?
- Does the child usually work alone or with others?
- Does the child smile easily?

Written observations should be detailed and specific in order to reveal as much as possible about the child. For example, recording that "Maria used the peg board during work play" does not tell as much as the following record:

> In using the peg board, Maria searched out all the red pegs and inserted them in two lines. Then she systematically picked out the yellow pegs, then the green, then the purple and inserted each color group in a line. She sat up straight in her chair and concentrated on this activity for 15 minutes, undistracted by noisy activities around her.

Staff may need training in how to observe and record children's behavior. Observations should be objective. The distinction between describing behavior and labeling or making judgments should be explained clearly.

- A behavior is what an observer sees or hears someone doing or saying. It provides specific information. "Juan hit someone with a block." "Tiffany frequently looks in the mirror."
- A label is a general description or judgement of a person without a contextual framework. "Juan is aggressive." "Tiffany is vain."

FORMAL ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Formal assessment involves using an instrument that provides a profile of the child's developmental skills. Not all assessment instruments can be administered by teachers —some must be given by trained professionals. Some assessment instruments are criterion-referenced; they assess individual children within a developmental framework. Some instruments arrange skills in a developmental sequence from simple to complex and cover a variety of developmental areas. This makes it possible to pinpoint the child's level of functioning and can be used to assess strengths and needs.

Programs that use a formal assessment instrument should not rely on the results of the instrument alone in planning for each child. Many experts question the value of using standardized tests with young children because their growth is uneven and constantly changing during these years of development. Test results may be used inappropriately to label children. In addition, most instruments require extensive staff training and can be costly and time consuming. If an assessment instrument is used, programs should include other information-gathering strategies discussed in this section to provide a more accurate and comprehensive picture of the child.

The *Resource Papers* contain an annotated list of developmental and assessment instruments (IV-15-17) and a checklist of questions to consider in reviewing instruments (IV-18-19). University libraries and the Resource Access Projects often have sample instruments that can be reviewed.

OBSERVING FOR THE PURPOSE OF UNDERSTANDING A PROBLEM

There are a number of strategies that can help staff better understand a particular problem. Anecdotal records kept over a period of time are very revealing. A special consultant may be brought in to observe the child.

Frequency counts or time sampling are also effective ways of recording behavior that causes concern and of supplying the staff with data to use in evaluating this behavior. This involves defining a specific behavior and either tallying the number of times it occurs in a specified period or measuring the length of time the behavior lasts. The technique is helpful for recording the number of times a child hits another child, the length or frequency of crying, the number of tantrums, the length of time a child attends to a specific task, or the number of times a child asks for help. This can be used over a day or week for infrequent behaviors, or for brief periods throughout the day for frequent behaviors. The results can be recorded in either a tally form or on a graph.

Such information provides important data for discussing with the staff the possible causes of the behaviors and for developing strategies to help the child.

In addition, the staff should be alerted to high-risk behaviors that may indicate a potential problem.

A child's vision should be checked if he/she:

- rubs eyes excessively;
- shuts or covers one eye, tilts head when reading or doing close work;
- blinks more than usual;
- holds book too close to eyes;
- often bumps into things or falls;
- crosses one or both eyes;
- experiences dizziness, headaches, or nausea following close work;
- is unable to see distant things clearly;
- frequently has red or bloodshot eyes;
- squints.

A child's hearing should be checked if he/she:

- does not respond when not facing the person speaking;
- talks in very loud or very soft voice;
- turns same ear towards a sound he or she wants to hear;
- has frequent earaches or ear infections;
- exhibits poor balance;
- is inarticulate;
- rubs ears.

A child may have emotional problems if he/she:

- engages only in solitary play by age 3 to 3½;
- overreacts to unexpected stimuli (loud noises);
- exhibits excessive attention-getting behaviors;
- demonstrates repetitive self-stimulating or self-destructive behaviors such as rocking or head banging;
- has a very short attention span: goes from one activity to another without completing any task;
- is overly fearful of new situations or transitions.

USING INFORMATION TO INDIVIDUALIZE

Education Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that individualization is taking place. Education Coordinators need to know if the staff is reviewing and evaluating information gathered on each child and using this information to plan activities to meet individual needs. They accomplish this by reviewing individual files and meeting with staff to discuss and help them make plans for individual children; observing the daily program and noting signs of individualizing; and promoting collaboration with other components to ensure that the total needs of each child are considered.

PREPARING INDIVIDUAL PLANS FOR EACH CHILD

Anecdotal records, work samples, ongoing assessment results, interviews with parents, and other documentation are kept in each child's individual folder. This information serves as the basis for developing an individual plan at the beginning of the program. This plan is discussed with the parents, who may be asked to share in developing objectives and in identifying strategies that can be implemented at home and at the center.

Education Coordinators should periodically review a random sample of the children's files to see if observations are being made, recorded, and evaluated. Files can be checked for:

- several observations for each child that include date, time, place, and a description of behaviors;
- comments that reflect descriptions of behaviors rather than judgments or labels;
- comments that describe the quantity and quality of the child's interaction with teachers, children, and staff;
- comments that address physical, cognitive, and emotional development;
- specific objectives to be achieved; and
- activities planned.

To support staff in developing individual plans for each child, Education Coordinators may work with a team of teachers or home visitors to prepare plans for several of the children. The following steps might be implemented:

- analyze data collected from observations, assessment procedures, and parent input;
- identify strengths, needs, and interests;
- develop goals and objectives;
- discuss this information with parents and seek their ideas and agreement; and
- agree on strategies and activities for meeting objectives.

Periodically, Education Coordinators might use site visits to sit with the staff, review the children's files, and discuss progress.

As an example, suppose in reviewing Amber's file, it is evident from the checklists kept by the teachers that she is performing quite normally for her age. However, observation records indicate that Amber seldom chooses an activity on her own, but usually waits to be asked by a staff member or a child to join an activity. The Education Coordinator might suggest some strategies to encourage Amber to make her own choices:

- talking with Amber quietly each morning to discuss the various choices and help her select one she'd like to try;
- giving each child his/her picture to put on a planning board to indicate what area they are going to play in;
- planning an activity to involve Amber and inviting her to ask one or two other children to join in.

In another example, the staff may have noted that several children have trouble using scissors. The Education Coordinator might suggest some appropriate activities to help strengthen small muscles, such as picking up objects with tongs, playing with clay, and playing with manipulative toys such as peg boards and tinker toys.

Follow-up is important. Education Coordinators will want to ensure that staff not only implement activities to meet individual needs but also that they continue to make evaluations to determine progress. Staff should review individual files regularly to assess each child's progress in achieving objectives and to determine new objectives.

OBSERVING THE DAILY PROGRAM

Probably the most effective way to determine whether the center-based staff is able to individualize is to visit the daily program. The weekly plans, the physical environment, and the interactions that take place between staff and children should provide evidence of individualizing.

The **weekly plans** developed by staff should be reviewed with the following questions in mind:

- Do they relate to curriculum goals and objectives?
- Do they include plans for individual children?
- Do they reflect an understanding of developmental levels?

Some teachers note "target children" on their weekly plans—children for whom special activities are planned to promote the development of specific skills or concepts.

The **classroom environment** should be orderly; it is hard to individualize in a messy, disorganized environment. Signs that individual needs are considered in planning and organizing space and materials include the following.

- Space is organized so children can work individually or in small groups.
- Children's work is displayed prominently and at a child's eye level.
- Materials are modified or selected according to children's cognitive and motor abilities (e.g., simple five piece puzzles in the beginning of the year; a variety of utensils to make play dough a complex activity; a platform so children can reach the bars on the playground).
- Space, materials, and activities are modified for children with handicapping conditions.
- A variety of activities is available offering independent as well as small group involvement.

Staff-child interactions also demonstrate attention to individual needs. Focus on the things staff members do and say to treat each child as an important individual. Does the staff recognize the interests and abilities unique to each child? Does the staff talk with children about themselves, their families, their pets, their interests and experiences?

There are many examples of sensitive staff-child interactions Education Coordinators might observe. Staff members might be:

- holding children on their laps;
- paying attention to those who are less verbal as well as those who have a lot to say;
- spending time on the playground with a child who has trouble getting involved in outdoor activities;
- helping a child identify a problem and explore possible solutions;
- asking questions about something a child has brought to school;
- working with a small group of children on a special activity;
- sharing a relevant book with a group in the block area; and
- talking to a parent.

Individualizing for bilingual children means that the staff allows them to use their first language while also encouraging them to learn English. Like all children, bilingual children differ from each other in their level of development, the skills they have learned, personality, strengths, needs, and interests. Selecting and adapting a curriculum that reflects the language and culture of the children enrolled (as described in Chapter III) is one way that Head Start programs individualize for bilingual children.

PROMOTING COLLABORATION

Input from and involvement of other component staff help teachers and home visitors to individualize the program. The perspectives of the Parent Involvement Coordinator, the Health Coordinator, and the Coordinator of Handicapped Services are particularly critical to understanding a child's total situation and overall developmental needs. Staffings on individual children, often organized by the Education Coordinator and attended by staff from other components, as well as by the child's teachers or home visitor, are an effective way to promote collaboration.

Teamwork among components is especially important for children with handicapping conditions. Education staff should be involved in developing the Individual Education Plan (IEP) required for each handicapped child. An IEP is a comprehensive plan that addresses the needs, strengths, and special service requirements of a child with a diagnosed handicapping condition. For Head Start purposes, an IEP must contain:

- a statement of the child's present level of functioning in the social, emotional, motor, and cognitive areas of development and the identification of needs requiring special programming;
- a statement of annual goals, including short-term objectives for meeting those goals;

- a statement of needed services to be provided by each Head Start component in addition to those services provided for all Head Start children;
- a statement of the specific special education services Head Start will provide for the child, as well as services that must be provided by other agencies if the child is to participate in the Head Start program;
- the identification of personnel responsible for the delivery of services;
- the projected dates for initiation of services and the anticipated duration of services;
- a statement of objective criteria and evaluation procedures for determining periodically whether the short-term objectives are being achieved or need to be revised; and
- a statement for parents to sign indicating their participation in the IEP process and their approval of the completed IEP.

Education Coordinators ensure that the education staff receives training and support in working with children who have handicapping conditions, so that they can adapt activities to meet individual needs.

THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The daily program is conducted in three types of learning environments: in the classroom, outdoors, and in children's homes. Whether the program is conducted in the classroom or in the child's home, the education staff can select and organize materials and equipment to conform to the curriculum and the daily plan. In center-based programs, the staff has more control over the work environment. The classroom environment should reflect the program's curriculum. The Education Coordinator can play an active role in helping to select materials and equipment, overseeing how teachers organize the environment, and helping the staff to rearrange the classroom to more effectively support program goals.

In the home-based option, home visitors help parents learn to use the home resources and materials found in the home to teach their own children. Here the Education Coordinator may offer suggestions to the home visitor to help parents understand how to organize the children's toys and play areas.

HOW THE ENVIRONMENT REFLECTS THE EDUCATION PLAN

The Education Plan defines what type of learning environment supports the curriculum. Some examples follow.

Goal: To promote independence and autonomy

- Materials are displayed on low shelves where children can reach then.
- Materials are grouped logically and located in appropriate areas of the room.
- Picture labels on the shelves show children where to find materials and return them when they are finished.
- The environment is consistently organized so children can depend on finding the things they need.

Goal: To help each child develop a positive self-concept

- The play materials and pictures in the room reflect the cultural backgrounds of the children served by the program.
- Children's art work is displayed at eye level.
- Each child has a place to keep personal belongings.

Goal: To support the role of parents as the child's first and most important teachers

- A bulletin board is prominently displayed with notices for parents.
- A parent corner outside the classroom invites parents to sit down and chat or read.
- Signs are posted in each area of the room to help parent volunteers know how to participate effectively in the program.

Goal: To promote intellectual development

- A variety of materials is available in each area of the room in sufficient quantity.
- New materials are brought into the classroom to replace or add to the ones the children have used.

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- Materials are developmentally appropriate.
- Areas of the room are clearly defined to promote different kinds of activities: block building, dramatic play, art, table toys, science, reading, and listening.

WHEN THE CLASSROOM ARRANGEMENT IS NOT WORKING

Some classrooms are inviting and clearly support the teachers' goals. The children are purposefully active, they know where to find what they need, and they take care of materials.

Other classrooms are less inviting. The same equipment and materials may be organized in ways that work against the teachers' goals. When these teachers are helped to reassess their classroom environment and to rearrange the furniture and materials, they are likely to experience a dramatic change in the behavior of the children. This experience is usually enough to convince a teacher that room arrangement is a powerful teaching strategy.

Children's behavior is an important clue to the effectiveness of the classroom environment. Teachers should be helped to assess their classroom environment and consider changes if the children are observed doing any of the following:

- consistently running in the classroom;
- wandering around looking for things to do;
- repeating the same activity;
- remaining uninvolved and unable to stick with an activity;
- having difficulty sharing;
- using materials destructively;
- shouting from one area to the next—creating a high noise level;
- crawling under tables or on shelves;
- resisting cleaning up; and
- consistently depending on adults for the things they need.

Although these behaviors may have a variety of possible causes, the physical environment may also be considered in assessing how to deal with behavior that is not conducive to learning. For example, if all shelves are arranged against the walls instead of as dividers defining areas, the open spaces encourage running. If children resist cleaning up, it may not be clear to them where materials are supposed to go.

Checklists for evaluating classroom environments and outdoor spaces are included in the *Resource Papers* (IV-20-21). They can be used both to assess the environment for possible causes of behavior problems and to provide feedback to teachers on how the environment needs changing.

ADJUSTMENTS FOR CHILDREN WITH HANDICAPPING CONDITIONS

The primary goal in mainstreaming handicapped children is to enable them to learn in the least restrictive environment and to allow them to operate as independently as possible in the classroom. Adjustments to the environment depend on the type and severity of the handicapping condition.

If a classroom needs to be adapted for a child in a wheel chair or in braces, for example, the staff can be encouraged to:

- measure traffic lanes between areas to ensure that the child can maneuver from one area to the next;
- check the height of tables to ensure that the arms of the wheelchair fit under them; and
- arrange the access to and from the center.

A number of adjustments are possible and might be explored:

- opening traffic lanes;
- using a scooter board to get around the classroom;
- adding ramps;
- using a water tray on a table so the child can reach it; and
- adding blocks to the legs of the table to adjust the height.

Special equipment such as a standing table, bolsters, or wedges may be needed to accommodate other handicaps.

In a classroom serving a child with visual problems, the teacher should take time to orient the child and walk him/her through any new arrangement a number of times to explain the changes.

The Coordinator of Handicapped Services is the program's best resource for education staff needing to make adjustments to accommodate a child with a handicapping condition.

THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT IN THE HOME-BASED OPTION

The home visitor's competence in using the home and its immediate surroundings as the learning environment is key to the success of home-based programs. As no two families or homes are alike, individualization is necessary if the program is to be effective. In one home the visit may take place in the kitchen, while in another the visit may be restricted to the living room. In each case the task is to help the parent understand how the home environment can be used to help the child learn.

The creative use of what is available in the home is the task of the home visitor. Because the overall goal is to involve the parents, both the home visitor and the parents need to work as a team. For example, parents can be encouraged to capitalize on teachable moments during daily activities in the home to teach and reinforce concepts such as "big" and "little," "heavy" and "light."

In addition to using what's already in the home, home visitors should supply some basic materials. Supplies such as scissors, glue, puppets, paper, crayons, etc., are to supplement, not replace, what is in the home. Parents are more likely to follow through with activities if they are involved in collecting materials.

THE NEEDS OF ADULTS

Adults also spend time in the classroom. Teachers, teaching assistants, volunteers, and parents have needs that should be accommodated. It is not always possible to provide adults who work in the center with all the environmental comforts they would like, but some attention to their needs conveys concern and will be appreciated.

Adults need to have a place where the furniture is scaled to *their* size and where they can do paper work, meet together, and relax. Within the classroom itself, a large rocking chair not only provides a comfortable place for adults to sit but also creates a soft lap for the children. Adults like to have a place where they can safely leave their personal possessions while they are working with the children, and a place where they can take breaks from the busy classroom activities.

A place within the center for parents sends a message that they are important and always welcome. Education Coordinators can work with the Parent Involvement Coordinator to provide a couch, table and chair, a shelf with resources, or an attractive and inviting bulletin board filled with announcements.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

As noted in Chapter III, Education Component staff is often involved and consulted in preparing and monitoring the budget for materials and equipment. Their input on what materials are needed and what supplies have to be periodically replaced is invaluable. Soliciting their ideas conveys a sense of respect for their role and gives the staff control over the program they have to implement. Overseeing the selection of materials and equipment being used at a given time is another aspect of the Education Coordinator's role. There should be a reason for selecting each item used or displayed by the education staff at any given time. In observing what materials are available and being used, some questions to consider include:

- Is there a **balance** in the types of materials selected?
- Are the materials appropriate for the **developmental levels** represented in the class (or the child being visited)?
- Do the materials reflect the **cultural backgrounds** of the children?
- Are the materials **nonsexist**?
- Are materials adapted or selected to meet the needs of children with **handicapping conditions**?
- Do the materials reflect the focus of the **curriculum**?
- Are the individual **interests** of the children considered in the selection of materials?

Each of these topics will be discussed briefly in this section.

BALANCE[1]

Achieving a balance in the types of materials displayed means that teachers have considered several aspects of the materials:

- soft or hard;
- open or closed;
- simple or complex; and
- high mobility or low mobility.

Soft materials are those that respond to the touch and provide a variety of tactile, sensory experiences. These include pillows, grass and plants, sewing materials, finger paint, dough, clay, sand, and water. **Hard materials** include manipulative games and blocks. It is important for teachers to include a selection of both hard and soft materials in the classroom.

Open and closed materials both have a place in the classroom. There generally is no one right way to use open material; that is, a child can create his/her own way of using the equipment. Examples include sand, blocks, most art materials, props for dramatic play, and construction toys. Closed materials dictate a right way in which children are expected to use them. Examples of closed materials are puzzles and matching games, such as lotto. Some materials are in between and allow for creative use within certain restrictions—tinker toys, lego, and peg boards are examples.

Simple and complex materials are also evident in the classroom. More complex materials usually hold a child's attention longer. But if a child is not ready for too much complexity, it can prove frustrating. Often the same material can be made simple initially, then increasingly complex. For example, play dough by itself, a pile of sand, or a limited number of unit blocks could each be considered a simple material. When children have explored these materials, the complexity can be increased by gradually adding additional accessories: shovels, containers, and sieves to the sand pile; rolling pins and cookie cutters to the play dough; more unit blocks and cars for the block area.

In selecting materials for the Education Component, preference should be given to materials that can be built into more complex units as opposed to those that have only one use and encourage only one kind of play.

Finally, the **levels of mobility** elicited by a piece of equipment or material should be considered. High mobility equipment allows children to use their whole bodies. This includes equipment for climbing, running, riding, throwing, building, and swinging. Low mobility equipment requires children to sit still and use their small muscles. Examples of low mobility equipment include small manipulative toys, crayons and markers, scissors (both right and left handed), and books.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES

Children use materials in different ways depending on their developmental level. A two-year-old is likely to touch, taste, and bang a play phone; a four-year-old may use it in dramatic play to "make a phone call." Children can master large lego blocks before they can handle smaller ones. When children have had little experience in dramatic play, they need realistic props to entice them into the dramatic play area to imitate and pretend. Only later can they use more abstract and unfamiliar props in make-believe.

In making judgments about what to set out and when, teachers should be aware that in the beginning of the year, especially when children have never participated in a group program before, the selection of materials should be based on an understanding of the level of skills children have developed. For example, it would be inappropriate to put out a complex puzzle with 28 pieces if most of the children have never seen a puzzle before. Simple four- or five-piece puzzles are best in the beginning of the year. Duplicates of basic materials are better than a wide variety because children can learn from each other and they are not required to wait a long time for a turn. Closed materials, such as peg boards and pegs or simple five-piece puzzles are reassuring, rewarding, and give children a feeling of accomplishment. As children feel more comfortable about using materials, the complexity and variety can be increased.

Education Coordinators might pose the following questions to assess whether the staff is aware of developmental stages in selecting materials.

- What concepts or skills are you hoping children will learn in using these materials? (Classification, balance, matching one-to-one.)

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[1] This discussion is based on the work of Elizabeth Prescott, Pacific Oaks College, Anaheim, California.

- How do children use the props in the house corner? (Do they make-believe with objects? Use props as part of a play?)
- Which children are able to cut with scissors?
- Which children are able to complete the puzzles?

CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

Ethnic backgrounds of the children in a given classroom should be reflected in the materials and pictures in the room.

In visiting classrooms, Education Coordinators can observe signs of cultural sensitivity in the following places:

- pictures displayed on the walls;
- props and dolls in the house corner and other dramatic play areas;
- props in the block area;
- books displayed;
- records or tapes available for children; and
- signs of special projects or holidays celebrated.

SEXUAL STEREOTYPING

The messages conveyed in children's toys and materials should reflect that both girls and boys can assume nurturing roles in the family as well as a wide range of jobs and professions. Materials to be screened for sexist images include props for the block and house corners, children's books, pictures on the walls, games, and puzzles.

In making observations, Education Coordinators might consider the following questions.

- Are the props in the house corner equally appealing to boys and girls?
- Do the house corner props include
  - briefcases as well as purses and suitcases?
  - lunch boxes?
  - work shirts?
  - boys' jackets and ties?
  - hats and uniforms for different community workers?
- Do the props in the block area include:
  - community helpers that show men and women in a variety of roles?
  - doll furniture as well as trucks and animals?
- Do the books and the pictures on the walls include:
  - men and women in interesting professions?
  - girls and women displaying positive behaviors such as solving problems, leading a group, making decisions?
  - boys and men assuming nurturing roles in the family?
- Are girls and boys encouraged to try all games and puzzles?
- Do games promote certain stereotypes (Old Maid, for example)?

HANDICAPS

Selecting and adapting materials for children with handicapping conditions requires an understanding of the particular problem. The Coordinator of Handicapped Services can suggest appropriate materials. For some conditions, special materials are required and may need to be purchased. For example:

- puzzles with large pieces and/or knobs for children with fine motor problems;
- books with large pictures for children with visual handicaps;
- a magnifying glass; and
- eating utensils with special grips and edges.

Education staff also can be helped to adapt materials already available. For example:

- applying masking tape to brush handles and crayons so children can get a firmer grip;
- slitting a small rubber ball and sliding the paint brush or crayon through it so children can grab it better;
- cutting out fabrics to paste on a story book to make it more tactile;
- adjusting the height of the easel; and
- using visuals to accompany classroom discussions.

No factor is more important in promoting positive attitudes about children with handicaps than the example set by the staff. Additionally, the New Friends Dolls (see the resources list at the end of this chapter) come with patterns, training materials, and activities to promote positive attitudes among all children. There are also many excellent story books depicting children with handicapping conditions.

CURRENT FOCUS OF THE CURRICULUM

Education Coordinators can expect to see materials in the centers that were selected for the purpose of teaching a new skill or concept or to extend children's knowledge. These materials might include:

- new props for the house corner;
- new accessories for the block areas;
- books and records on the topic;
- a display table of objects to explore;
- special art activities;
- pictures on the walls; and
- toys with relevant pictures (e.g., puzzles, lotto games).

Materials should correspond to the total program and to the teacher's plan for the week. For example, if staff members planned to focus on classification and identification, they might set out materials for sorting and comparing, such as:

- peg boards and pegs sorted in margarine tubs by color;
- colored beads and laces;
- colored stacking rings;
- a variety of sizes and colors of paper in the art area;
- large and small utensils in the house corner;
- varied sizes of accessories in the block area; and
- Cuisenaire rods.

INTERESTS OF THE CHILDREN

In an effort to identify what children need, many programs forget that children also have strengths and interests. The knowledge that Carlos loves to build tall buildings in the block area, Peter is exceptionally skilled at puzzles, Stephanie helps her father work on cars, and Mary loves to make a collage, will help the staff select materials that will interest these children and then to use the materials to help the children acquire new skills and concepts.

Parent conferences at the center or in the home offer an excellent opportunity for staff to learn about each child's special interests and strengths. Such information should be available in a child's folder. It is just as important for staff in center-based programs to record and use this information as it is for them to note a child's needs.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Implementation of the Education Component Plan relies to a great extent on the staff's ability to work successfully with the group as well as with individual children.

Good classroom management means that children are developing **self-control**: they are learning how to make independent choices, to find and return the things they need, to work cooperatively with others, and to solve problems.

In a well-managed daily program, adults and children are purposefully active. They seem to know what to do at any given time, who to turn to for assistance, and what's expected of them. This is not to say that in a well-managed classroom the Education Coordinator will not see children who are angry or sad, over-excited or depressed; children who don't feel good about themselves and who are having a hard time. But the teachers are there to provide guidance and to help them gain control. The teachers know how to plan a program that helps children become self-directed and they know what to do when children need help.

To examine the factors that affect classroom management, it is helpful to review:

- the daily schedule;
- how routines and transitions are handled; and
- the approach to discipline.

THE DAILY SCHEDULE

A daily schedule should be posted in every classroom. No matter how well the teachers know the sequence of the day, a good manager displays the schedule so that everyone—staff, parents, and volunteers—is aware of the day's sequence and structure. In some classrooms, teachers have represented the sequence of activities in pictures so that the children can also "read" the daily schedule.

The daily schedule structures the sequence of activities and allocates time periods for each activity. The schedule should be followed fairly consistently; children develop a sense of security from knowing how the day's events will be ordered. They feel powerful and in control when they can say, "I know what we do next; we go outside!" Within that guideline, however, there is flexibility to accommodate a special activity, such as interacting with a visitor to the center, a particularly interesting activity that the children don't want to leave, or some special event. Additionally, the schedule may be revised during the year as children grow, develop, and expand their skills. For example, the length of the story time may increase.

Although differences will exist from one classroom to another, a well-planned daily schedule reflects:

- a balance of active and quiet activities (e.g., a quiet activity like story reading follows an active period like free play or outdoor play);
- sufficient time for workplay—when children can choose their own activities;
- time periods suited to the age of the children (e.g., preschoolers can't be expected to sit still for 45 minutes and listen to a story);
- sufficient time for transitions such as clean-up, preparing for lunch; and
- specific program requirements, such as:
  - the length of time children are at the center (full day, half day),
  - the number of snacks and/or meals served, and
  - the geographic location (e.g., how much of the program can take place outdoors).

HANDLING TRANSITIONS

Transitions are often troublesome. They are the in-between times when children are moving from one activity to the next—from clean-up to circle time, from outdoor play to lunch preparation and lunch time. They often become problem periods when children who have nothing to do choose to run around, take out toys that are already put away, or wrestle with each other. Waiting is not easy for young children and when no directions are given, children naturally find something to occupy their time. Usually that is not what adults had in mind!

When behavior problems tend to occur at transition times, Education Coordinators can observe what adults may be doing to contribute to this. The following questions may be helpful in identifying contributing factors.

- Have the teachers given children sufficient warning before asking them to finish their activities and clean up?
- Is clean-up treated as an important and valuable activity or as something to get out of the way as quickly as possible?
- Are children asked to wait without being given something to do (like finger plays, story telling, or singing)?
- Are adults busy doing things without involving the children while the children wait around? (Sometimes teachers feel it's more efficient if they do things like setting the tables or cleaning the paint brushes while the children wait for the next activity.)
- Have the adults explained clearly what they expect the children to do or are the children confused and uncertain about where they should be?
- Do adults expect all the children to complete a transitional activity at one time? (Sometimes teachers have everyone get coats or brush teeth or collect papers at one time causing a traffic jam and a lot of pushing or waiting.)

Attention to transition periods is an important part of good classroom management. Transition times can be used for learning and reinforcing concepts and skills. Teachers who are encountering problems at these times will welcome suggestions on how to handle transitions more effectively. The *Resource Papers* contain specific suggestions that can be offered to the staff (see "Strategies for Smooth Transitions," IV-22).

DISCIPLINE

Discipline is an important part of classroom management. It involves both the rules established by the staff to guide behavior and the interactions that take place each day.

Good discipline helps children gain self-control so that they live by the rules because they understand and have internalized them, not because an adult is watching. Good discipline helps children learn to respect both themselves and others. Children develop self-respect when adults listen to them, verbalize how they are feeling, and help them learn to express their feelings in acceptable ways. They develop respect for others when adults set an example by demonstrating respect for each child's individual needs, are consistent about applying rules, and protect each person's rights to safety and individuality.

Rules are the guidelines that adults and children live by in the classroom. Teachers should be able to articulate what the rules are and how they are communicated to the children. The most effective classroom rules are easy for children to understand, few in number, and consistently enforced. The best way for children to learn the rules is to observe adults who live by these rules themselves and to have them explained simply and firmly at the appropriate time.

If staff members cannot articulate clearly what rules they have established, the Education Coordinator can work with them. Basic rules might include:

- attention to safety (hitting, biting, kicking, or spitting are not allowed);
- a respect for each person's feelings and rights;
- a respect for materials;
- protection for personal belongings—items brought from home stay in the child cubby when not in use; and
- appropriate places for activities—climbing and running are outdoor activities.

How rules are enforced and conveyed to children is as important as the rules themselves. An Education Coordinator can expect to see problems if adults model these behaviors:

- talking down to children or shouting from across the room;
- belittling children;
- losing control and yelling;
- always telling children what they are *not* to do instead of what they are allowed to do;
- ignoring children's misbehavior and failing to deal with what led to the misbehavior;
- giving children attention only when they misbehave; and
- punishing children by shaming them, making them sit for long periods of time until they calm down, or isolating them from the group.

SUPPORTIVE INTERACTIONS

The quality of staff-child interactions is an important indicator of whether adults understand the purpose of discipline in Head Start. In observing staff interactions with children, Education Coordinators assess whether adults:

- show respect for each child's feelings even if they don't agree with how these feelings are expressed;
- state what they want children to do, not just what behavior they want stopped;
- bend down to the child's eye level, gently holding the child's arm or shoulder and talking calmly and firmly;
- give or have children give alternatives for inappropriate behavior;
- recognize the individual needs of children and when the rules have to bend a little;
- consistently define what is appropriate and what is not;
- ask children to identify and help solve problems; and
- focus on the behavior that is inappropriate, not on making the child feel like a bad person.

The *Resource Papers* include sample statements from teachers that convey support and positive discipline. Some Education Coordinators have found it useful to post these kinds of sayings in the classroom as reminders to staff and parents. The sample statements can also be useful to Education Coordinators in observing and listening to staff interactions. (See "Skilled Ways of Talking to Children," IV-23-24.)

PLANNING: PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

The long-term and weekly plans developed by the education staff document that the Education Component is meeting the Performance Standards by demonstrating how well the Education Component is:

- following a developmentally based curriculum;
- individualizing the program; and
- coordinating with other components.

The information that is used for planning includes:

- records of ongoing observations and evaluation of children's growth and development;
- the Education Plan, which defines the program's philosophy of education, goals and objectives of the Education Component, and strategies for achieving these goals and objectives;
- individualized plans for each child;
- information from other component staff (e.g., schedule of medical and dental visits, nutrition goals, etc.);
- the daily schedule;
- the interests and concerns of the children; and
- the resources on hand (staff and parents, the physical environment, and materials).

All of this information is pulled together when the staff develops weekly plans and long-term plans that cover two to four months. Unless the education staff uses this information to plan activities, they are unlikely to achieve the goals and objectives of the program, to meet the needs of each child, or to run a smooth program.

Weekly plans should include:

- a list of objectives teachers or home visitors have in mind;
- the activities that are designed to achieve these objectives;
- how activities will be individualized for specific children;
- what period of the day the activities will be offered; and
- who is responsible for each activity.

ENSURING THAT WEEKLY PLANS ARE CONSISTENT WITH PROGRAM GOALS

After observing a classroom and reviewing the weekly plans, Education Coordinators may find these questions helpful in determining how well the staff understands the curriculum and whether they are able to plan and implement developmentally appropriate activities to achieve program objectives.

- What objectives are you working on this week? (If this is not obvious from the lesson plans.)
- Why did you select these activities?
- What have you been observing in the children that made you decide on this activity?
- What do you think children are learning from this activity?
- What activities came before this one to prepare children? On what did you base this activity?
- How does this activity fit into your total plan?
- How will parents be involved?
- How do you suit the activity to individual children?

Staff should be able to explain their reasons for including an activity. Activities should be planned because they will contribute to the children's development, because they contribute to achievement of program objectives, and because they are consistent with the program's philosophy.

To illustrate the connection between program objectives and activities, consider the goal of promoting intellectual skills by "*encouraging children to solve problems, initiate activities, explore, experiment, question, and gain mastery through learning by doing*." The staff's weekly plan might identify the following objectives and activities to promote achievement of these objectives.

Objective 1: To identify new ways of *grouping* materials by generating their own categories.

Activities to promote achievement of this objective might include:

- a collection of bottle caps that children can sort in numerous ways (sizes, colors, ridged or smooth, plain or labeled, pointed or flat, spouts that move up and down, snap on, screw on, etc.);
- assorted buttons and keys that also can generate a variety of categories;
- a variety of cars and trucks in the block area;
- a circle game where all the children put their shoes in the middle and think up different ways to group them;
- a game of having children group themselves in different ways (e.g., how they look, what they are wearing, things they like); and
- different categories for sorting the laundry.

Objective 2: To promote *problem-solving skills*.

Activities to promote achievement of this objective might include:

- a balance scale (can be home-made with wood and margarine tubs) on the science table, housekeeping area, or other part of the room, with assorted objects to weigh and compare;
- addition of strings and pulleys to the block area to encourage children to try new building ideas;
- a guessing game at circle time ("I'm thinking of an animal that has four legs, moves fast, and you can ride him.");
- helping a child think through ways to build steps or a ramp for a building in the block area; and
- basic colors of paint in the art area and muffin tins to allow children to mix colors and discover how to make new ones like purple, brown, and green.

If weekly classroom plans reveal little connection between daily activities and program objectives, teachers need assistance. The best place to start is with the Education Plan itself; review the program philosophy, goals, objectives, and the curriculum with the teachers. A format for developing plans must be identified, and several sample weekly plans will need to be prepared with the teachers before they can feel comfortable with the process and appreciate its usefulness.

HOW PLANNING HELPS STAFF TO INDIVIDUALIZE

If the staff is using assessment information to plan daily activities, it should be evident in the following ways:

- the activities are developmentally appropriate;
- staff members can explain how each child is progressing and where each needs help;
- the weekly lesson plan indicates which children need special help in a given activity; and
- the staff can explain why they selected the activities and what their objectives are for each child.

PLANNING CONTRIBUTES TO A SMOOTH PROGRAM AND GOOD TEAMWORK

When teachers, volunteers, and parents plan together, the chances of having a well organized and smoothly running program are greatly enhanced. Planning is an essential factor in effective classroom management.

When all the adults in the classroom have participated in developing the plans for the week, everyone knows what is expected and who is responsible for what at any given time. This gives the staff time to think ahead and prepare materials that will be needed each day so they are readily available for the children. Children are likely to become restless if they have to wait while the teacher gathers and prepares materials for an activity.

Teamwork is a natural outcome of joint planning. Adults are better able to support one another when they know what activities are planned, the purpose of each activity, and who will assume the lead responsibility. When each person has a thorough understanding of the objectives, he/she is more likely to pick up on learning opportunities and to promote achievement of these objectives. If adults who are assigned to work with a small group are prepared and organized, the activity will be more likely to succeed with the children. Teachers and parents who have successful experiences working with children will be motivated to continue practicing effective teaching strategies, such as good planning.

HELPING STAFF DEVELOP GOOD PLANS

The curriculum provides the framework for planning activities. It defines the scope and sequence of activities that meet program objectives. Long-range plans demonstrate how teachers will implement the curriculum and meet individual needs during the year. Weekly or daily plans demonstrate how teachers plan to implement the curriculum each day.

LONG-RANGE PLANS

While planning takes place weekly, some thought must be given to what topics and skills will be introduced month by month. Long-range planning ensures that the curriculum is being followed and that there is a plan for covering the topics and skills identified in the curriculum. Most Education Coordinators feel that teachers should make these decisions based on what they know about their children, their community, and individual preferences.

Projecting in two- to four-month blocks of time enables teachers to think ahead about what materials they will need, any changes in the room arrangement that will be required, books they want to get on a particular topic, and trips or special events connected with the plan. There may be budget implications that have to be worked out, letters of invitation, arrangements for transportation, and permission slips to be prepared and signed. Long-range plans make it possible for staff to prepare ahead of time so that they won't be disappointed when a lack of resources or arrangements prevents them from implementing their program ideas.

In long-range planning, the staff can also decide on special plans for groups of children with common developmental strengths and needs.

WEEKLY PLANS IN A CENTER-BASED OPTION

Weekly plans define what will take place each day and who is responsible for these activities. Weekly plans should be posted in each classroom so that all adults can refer to them.

Weekly staff meetings in each classroom provide a good forum for teachers and volunteers to get together and plan for the following week. The format selected facilitates the planning process and may vary depending on the following factors:

- number of days per week for children;
- curriculum selected; and
- staff preferences.

What may be a good format for one program may not work well for another. Whatever format is used, a weekly lesson plan should include the following information:

- objectives the staff wants to focus on;
- theme, unit, or key experiences being explored (if appropriate to the curriculum);
- activities for major blocks of time and in each area of the room;
- person responsible for activities; and
- individual needs to consider (e.g., how children will be grouped for special activities and which children will be encouraged to focus on specific activities).

MONTHLY PLANS IN A HOME-BASED OPTION

Monthly plans for a home-based option program include:

- objectives in each component area;
- the activities planned and materials needed;
- what materials are already in the home and what needs to be brought in; and
- an assessment of what happened and what was accomplished.

ESTABLISHING LINKAGES WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The next educational experience for most Head Start children is in the kindergarten classes of the elementary school system. In order to make this a smooth transition, Education Coordinators establish linkages with elementary school officials, and with the principal and kindergarten teachers at the elementary schools the Head Start children will be attending. The Education Coordinator and the education staff can provide the elementary school staff with information about the Education Component's goals and objectives and the other services provided by Head Start. In turn, the elementary school staff can provide Head Start with information about the kindergarten curriculum, the daily program, and services provided through the schools. This knowledge about the two programs can be used by Head Start and kindergarten teachers and parents to help ease the children's transition from Head Start to school.

LINKAGES WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

The Education Coordinator needs to develop an ongoing relationship with the elementary school administrators in the area served by the program. It is important to provide these administrators with an initial orientation to Head Start, and to keep them apprised of the Education Component's current activities. Strategies for maintaining ongoing linkages with the elementary schools include:

- establishing a district-wide system for kindergarten teachers and Head Start teachers to visit each other's classrooms;
- inviting school officials to serve on the Policy Council/ Committee or education advisory group;
- mailing copies of the program's newsletter to school officials;
- working with other professionals to provide officials with information about all the preschool programs in the community;
- inviting officials to give an overview of the services provided by the public schools at parent meetings;
- sponsoring joint training sessions on topics appropriate for Head Start and elementary school staff; and
- supporting the school system by encouraging parents to register their children for kindergarten promptly and with the required documents.

LINKAGES WITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STAFF

Establishing linkages with the elementary schools where Head Start children will attend kindergarten is best done by establishing relationships with the principal and kindergarten teachers at the schools involved. These personal contacts will ensure that the two groups work together to promote a smooth transition for the children and the continued involvement of parents in their children's education. The Education Coordinator should provide the elementary school staff with an orientation to Head Start covering the program's developmental philosophy, the comprehensive services provided, the extent and degree of parent involvement, and examples of how Head Start children are helped to grow and develop. Staff from the elementary school can also provide an orientation for Head Start parents and staff covering the role of parents in the school, how services are provided to children with handicapping conditions, how parents can use the summer months to help prepare their children for kindergarten, registration procedures, and other details about the school—transportation, breakfast and lunch programs, after-school programs, etc.

Throughout the process of establishing and maintaining positive relationships with the schools, it is important to emphasize that the Head Start curriculum is based on child development theories and, therefore, skills that are not developmentally appropriate are not taught. In addition, a child's records are not given to other schools unless parents have granted written permission. The records for children with handicapping conditions are usually transferred so that these children can receive the necessary services in their next educational setting.

EASING THE TRANSITION FOR CHILDREN

The Education Coordinator can work with education staff and parents to develop activities to help children prepare for their new school. Sample strategies are described below.

- Arrange a field trip to the new school so that children can see the teachers, the classrooms, and other parts of the building such as the bathrooms, the gym, and the cafeteria. Stay long enough to play on the playground.
- Sponsor a mid-summer group picnic so children and parents can see their old friends.
- Post a map of the neighborhood with markers for the Head Start center and the new school.
- Read stories about going to a new school, and give children plenty of opportunities to express and discuss their concerns.
- At the end of the year, play a "kindergarten game" to prepare children for some of the new procedures they will have to follow—lining up to go to the bathroom, for example.

INVOLVING PARENTS IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

When parents become interested and involved in Head Start everyone benefits. The parents are likely to become more competent and self-assured, the children's learning is reinforced at home, education staff can receive much needed input and assistance, and the community can become a better place for families. Head Start recognized from the beginning that parents are the prime educators of their own children, and that encouraging the ongoing development of the whole family is the best way to ensure that the progress children make in Head Start will continue.

The Parent Involvement Coordinator has primary responsibility for ensuring that meaningful opportunities for parent participation occur throughout the program. The Performance Standards for the Education Component also identify specific areas of responsibility for the Education Coordinator and the staff. These are:

- including parents in program planning and curriculum development and having them serve as resources;
- providing information to parents in child development and alternative child rearing practices through a program jointly developed with other components;
- training parents in observing the growth and development of their children in the home environment and identifying and handling special developmental needs;
- providing methods for helping parents understand and use a variety of strategies to foster learning and development of their children;
- having regular conferences with parents; and
- making at least two home visits each year in center-based programs.

A description of how parents are involved in developing the Education Component Plan was provided in Chapter III. This section examines three ways in which the education staff can encourage and ensure meaningful daily parent participation:

- by developing strong and effective linkages between the home and the center;
- by including parents in planning the program; and
- by involving parents in the classroom.

DEVELOPING HOME/PROGRAM LINKAGES

Education Component staff are often the parents' primary contact and source of information. Teachers and home visitors may therefore serve a dual role as educator and public relations representative for the program. **Individual communication** between staff and parents provides information about the progress of each child and gives parents an overall impression of the program.

More **formal, group-oriented communication** also takes place in the Education Component. Every Head Start program is required to develop a written two-way communication system between staff and parents. This system is a part of the Parent Involvment Component Plan. Education Coordinators should be familiar with this plan, assist in its implementation, and be involved in any revisions affecting the Education Component. A visit to a center is a good time to look for indicators that the plan is working and to provide training for staff and parents related to attitudes and skills involved in two-way communication.

Center-based staff make **home visits** to let parents know how their child is progressing and to promote the parents' own skills as their child's prime educators. Home visitors routinely point out to parents examples of children's progress.

Each of these three types of communications is described below.

COMMUNICATING WITH INDIVIDUAL PARENTS

Parents may want to participate in different ways; not everyone is comfortable with the same activities. Parent participation will therefore vary from family to family. For one parent, coming to the classroom regularly is the way to participate. For another, contributing special props for the dress-up corner is the appropriate degree of participation.

Education staff sometimes need support in accepting parents as they are, recognizing that they may have varying perceptions of life. Other reminders for staff may include the following points about parents.

- Their lives are likely to be complex.
- They may need help feeling good about themselves, both as people and as parents.
- They may have had little experience interacting with people they don't know well.
- They may be fearful of, or uncomfortable with, teachers.
- They may have more work to do than time to do it.
- They may have more responsibilities than they have resources.
- They want the best for their children.

Education staff may have interactions with parents who are angry, overly demanding, or hostile toward the program. The Education Coordinator can prepare staff for these situations by discussing alternative approaches to responding to anger or displeasure and helping staff to understand the importance of listening to parents' concerns, even when they are presented in a negative way.

Often the staff will have to maintain contact with parents they rarely see. These parents may work, have other small children, care for a sick relative, live too far from the center, or just not feel ready to come frequently. In these instances, other ways of maintaining communication with parents are required. Some suggestions for accomplishing this follow.

Notes. Everyone likes to receive a personal note if the contents are pleasant. Parents who receive such notes are also more apt to write them. Notes could include something a child said, did, or showed an interest in, or a report on a budding friendship. Notes of a less personal nature could describe what the class is working on, with an idea for an at-home activity to reinforce that learning or, for the home-based program, a follow-up activity. If communications are regular, a note about a problem or a request for help is easier to receive.

Telephone calls. Reassuring words over the phone are another way to keep parents in touch with the program. A call to a sick child lets the parent know that the staff cares about the child. A call to ask about a new baby lets the parent know the staff cares about the rest of the family too.

GROUP-ORIENTED COMMUNICATION

Much of the communication between parents and education staff involves presenting information to all the parents as a group, either in newsletters, at meetings, on a bulletin board, or through other written notices.

Some specific communication techniques the staff might implement are described below.

Newsletters. Prepared by parents and teaching staff monthly or as needed, newsletters can be used to communicate the following information:

- announce a meeting, party, or field trip;
- request materials;
- inform parents of center job openings;
- identify the current focus of classroom activities and suggest at-home curriculum activities; and
- thank or request volunteers.

Newsletters should be short and easy to read. It's usually more effective to send out brief newsletters frequently than long ones infrequently. The newsletter should be available in the primary languages of the community. Everyone likes to see their name in print, so be sure to include both parents' and children's names as often as possible, and make sure that over time, each child's name has been mentioned.

Finally, newsletters should be fun to read. It is important to communicate policy updates to parents, but don't fill the whole newsletter with this type of information. Avoid educational jargon and acronyms.

Program Calendar. The staff can develop a program calendar to include dates and information about major program activities, such as when home visiting is scheduled, when centers will be closed, and when parent training events will take place. The calendar can also give additional dates for field trips, birthdays, center committee meetings, health screenings, and home-based parent meetings and group socialization times.

Parent Meetings. Classroom and Center Committee meetings can provide a regular opportunity for both formal and informal, staff-parent communication about such topics as child development, the curriculum, home activities, volunteering, participating in trips, and celebrations. The Education Coordinator can facilitate this process by planning with parents, parent involvement staff, and education staff to develop a format for center meetings that allows some time for both the staff's presentations and for the parents' own agenda items.

Center Parent Room or Parent Corner. This space, which is often the responsibility of the Parent Involvement Component, provides a comfortable spot for teachers and parents to share conversation and coffee. Education staff can also plan with parent involvement staff to use it to display the Education Component Plan, curriculum ideas, at-home activity sheets (regularly updated), and other educational or parenting materials.

Parent Bulletin Board/Display Space. Materials displayed here may cover the same topics mentioned for newsletters, and more. Suggestions for enhancing communication through the use of a bulletin board follow.

- Most people read left to right and not much above eye level.
- If the display doesn't change, people will stop looking at it.
- People like to see pictures of themselves and their children and/or their names.
- Short messages are more likely to be read than long articles.
- It is pleasant to find personal messages at the center.
- It is more fun to plan and create bulletin boards and displays with others than alone.

CONDUCTING HOME VISITS IN CENTER-BASED PROGRAMS

Head Start's Performance Standards call for a minimum of two home visits a year in center-based programs. Many programs opt for additional scheduled home visits because it is such an effective way to include parents in planning the activities that will help their child develop. Sometimes the education staff needs to be reminded of the benefits of home visits.

- The encouragement of a caring staff person may give a reluctant parent the extra self-confidence needed to become more active in the program.
- A one-to-one explanation of how parents can help their children at home is often more effective than the written materials sent home.
- Seeing first hand all the other responsibilities parents have to cope with may make the staff member less judgmental about a parent's infrequent visits to the center.
- Spending time in a child's home may give staff new insights into the child's likes, dislikes, strengths, and needs.

Home visits are not always easy for staff, nor is it always comfortable for parents to invite staff into their home. Therefore, planning for home visits is very important and should begin when parents first enroll their children in the program. Staff can inform parents that home visits are part of the program and explain why they are important, how long they last, and what takes place. However, parents also need to hear that their participation is not required but desired, and will in no way affect whether or not their child continues in the program. The home visiting schedule should be planned together by the parents and the staff. Ideally the first home visit will take place in the fall to coincide with the child's entry into the program.

In planning home visits with the staff, a review of the steps and procedures is often helpful. These steps are outlined below.

Scheduling the visit. Schedule appointments at mutually convenient times. This is the time to share expectations for the visit and to encourage the parents to make a list of things they would like to talk about.

Getting ready for the visit. Review the child's records and any anecdotal notes. Ask other education staff for their suggestions or points to make about the child's progress. Bring along samples of the child's work. Try to recall a recent incident to relate involving the child. Most parents love to hear about what their children do when they're away from home. If an activity will be demonstrated, prepare the materials in advance.

Making the visit. Be on time. Find the address on a map before setting out. Try to make parents feel at ease by being warm and friendly. Take along something for the child to do so the parents are free to talk. Ask parents what they would like to talk about, then state what else will be covered. Try to make time for everyone's concerns. Review the child's assessment, progress, and plans. Try not to use jargon or words that will not be easily understood. Give parents some specific ways to help the child—practicing concepts, ideas, and skills learned at the center such as matching games or rhyming sounds. Introduce activities using materials found in the home, such as sorting or separating small buttons or bottle caps in an egg carton. Close the visit with a review of what you've discussed and plans for the child's continued classroom and home activities.

The staff also needs suggestions for dealing with problems that may occur during home visits. Role-playing difficult situations in advance is one way to practice handling situations such as:

- getting the television turned off;
- calming an overly excited child;
- keeping to the subject;
- coping with unexpected visitors or other family members; or
- dealing with angry or belligerent parents.

Anticipating problems and practicing how to deal with them will help the staff feel more positive and self-confident about making home visits.

INCLUDING PARENTS IN PLANNING THE PROGRAM

Parents should be encouraged to become actively involved in planning the daily program. As parents learn more about the way teachers plan each day's activities, they will come to recognize that there is a purpose for everything included in the daily program. The active involvement of parents in planning the weekly home visits—including defining and implementing goals for the child and family—is unique to home-based programs.

As an example, suppose the staff at one of the centers has decided to focus on the neighborhood. They have already identified some possible activities. Parents can participate by choosing between several suggested activities or by brainstorming ideas for places to visit, people to invite to the classroom, and props for the house corner. In other words, the staff presents a framework, while parents contribute suggestions or opinions on how to enhance the activities.

Some specific suggestions to offer the staff on including parents in planning daily activities are described below.

- Schedule classroom planning times so that parents can participate. Planning may be done after class, before a center committee meeting, or at other specially arranged times convenient for parents.
- Establish curriculum committees of parents and staff in which parents contribute ideas for at-home activities to augment classroom learning.
- Form library committees composed of parents who assist in selecting children's books that support the curriculum.
- Involve parents in selecting sites for appropriate field trips.
- Determine what resources parents may be willing to share, and incorporate these into planning. These might include special skills or abilities, knowledge of particular culture(s), interesting places of work, or special hobbies.
- Set up a toy lending library at the center. Include a card with each toy specifying its use and educational value.

INVOLVING PARENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

Anyone who has ever worked with 15 or more three- and four-year-olds at once knows how valuable an extra adult can be. Head Start encourages parents to become classroom volunteers for a number of reasons.

- An extra adult in the classroom can facilitate individualized activities.

- More adults mean more personal attention for the children.
- Parents may learn more about child development, the curriculum, and planning and apply that knowledge in working with their own children.
- Parents become more self-confident, which also promotes development of effective parenting skills.

When teachers are stuck and need new ideas on how to involve parents, Education Coordinators might suggest contributions that parents can make.

- Play a musical instrument and lead a singing group.
- Prepare some special food with the children.
- Wipe away tears, give extra hugs, rebraid a pigtail, offer an extra lap, or listen to a tale.
- Take a group of children on a nature walk.
- Hold a piece of wood for a child pounding a nail.
- Pick up on teachable moments by helping a child wonder and ask questions.
- Be responsible for a small group of children during a field trip.
- Make observations.

These examples are all ways for parents to have meaningful interactions with children. When the staff takes the time to plan for such meaningful involvement, everyone benefits. Parents are more eager to participate as classroom volunteers when they can see how important they are to the children. The children benefit whenever there are more adults available to meet their needs. The staff benefits too, not only because they have someone else to share the work, but also because they've seen parents as a valuable resource that enhances the quality of the daily program.

Supervision and training of classroom volunteers are discussed in Chapters VI and VII.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION PLAN

- Provide ongoing training so that the staff understands the curriculum and knows how to implement it.
- Visit centers and homes periodically to observe and participate in the daily programn.
- Review the make-up of the class and be sure the staff-child ratio is sound, and that the ratio of handicapped to non-handicapped children is manageable.
- Demonstrate how to use information gained from ongoing observing and recording of children to plan appropriate activities.
- Review children's individual files and the weekly plans for the group and provide feedback to the staff.
- Discuss home visits with staff so that the experience will be positive and beneficial.
- Assess the classroom environment to determine if it supports staff goals. Help the staff rearrange the room if necessary.
- Post some signs in a classroom with quotes of the kind of language you want adults to use with children.
- Assist home visitors in developing individualized plans to meet the assessed needs of the families they work with.

RESOURCES

OVERSEEING THE DAILY PROGRAM

Feeney, Stephanie; Christensen, Doris; and Moravcik, Eva. *Who Am I in the Lives of Children?* Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., Columbus, OH 43216. 1983. $23.95.

This basic introduction to teaching young children can be used both in introductory and curriculum courses in early childhood education and by teachers already practicing in the field. The book begins with explanations of underlying concepts of child development and early childhood education. It also includes a multiplicity of tested guidelines, strategies, and suggestions for coping successfully with the troublesome parts of teaching. Discussions of practical issues such as planning, observation, assessment, the learning environment, curriculum, and working with children with special needs are included.

INDIVIDUALIZING

Arenas, Soledad. "Bilingual/Bicultural Programs for Preschool Children." *Children Today*, July/August, 1978. Head Start Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013. Free.

This article explains the unique problems that bilingual/bicultural children face during their preschool years and the importance of a bilingual/bicultural program in helping children adjust to the new language and culture. Fundamental principles of successful programs are provided. ACYF's efforts in curriculum development, staff training, resource networks, and research also are summarized.

Bentzen, Warren R. *Seeing Young Children—A Guide to Observing and Recording Behavior*. Delmar Publishers Inc., 2 Computer Drive West, P.O. Box 15-015, Albany, NY 12212. 1985. $13.13.

This book for students of early childhood education and child development, practicing teachers, and parents includes seven observation methods: specimen description, time sampling, event sampling, anecdotal records, diary records, frequency counts, and checklists. Exercises are provided, interpretation discussed, sample forms included, and a glossary of terms provided.

Cohen, Dorothy, and Stern, Virginia. *Observing and Recording the Behavior of Young Children*. Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027. 1971. $11.95.

This book includes in-depth information about classroom observation techniques. It emphasizes ways to interpret the recorded information and how to use the information to develop classroom activities.

Heckin, M., and Mengle, P. *New Friends: Mainstreaming Activities to Help Young Children Understand and Accept Individual Differences*. Chapel Hill Training Outreach Project, Lincoln Center, Merritt Hill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. 1983. $45.00.

The activities presented in this book are to be used with "New Friends" dolls with handicapping conditions. The book includes patterns for making the dolls. Their use encourages children to accept other children who have handicapping conditions and makes children who have handicapping conditions more at ease.

Mainstreaming Series. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979. The manuals are available from the RAPs.

This series of eight manuals contains practical classroom suggestions that teachers can easily implement. Each manual addresses a specific handicapping condition: speech and language impediments, visual impairments and blindness, hearing impairments and deafness, orthopedic handicaps, health impairments, learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, and mental retardation.

Meisels, Samuel J. *Developmental Screening in Early Childhood: A Guide*. NAEYC, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-5786. 1985. $3.50.

This guide is designed for teachers, administrators, parents, and others concerned with understanding and implementing effective developmental screening programs for young children. The guide begins with a discussion of the purpose of screening and its role in the assessment and intervention process. It provides guidelines for selecting a screening instrument and performing the screening. Detailed descriptions of four valid screening instruments are also included.

Southworth, Lois E; Burr, Rosemary L.; and Cox, Andrea E. *Screening and Evaluating the Young Child: A Handbook of Instruments to Use from Infancy to Six Years*. Charles C. Thomas, 2600 S. First Street, Springfield, IL 62717. 1981. $16.75.

This book, which provides an overview of instruments that can be used with children from infancy to six years, is intended to simplify the process of selecting tests for use by teachers of preschool children. Part I organizes brief descriptions of individually administered instruments into eight categories: cognitive, comprehensive, language/bilingual, motor skills, readiness, socioemotional, speech/hearing/vision, and visual motor/visual perceptual. Part II lists summaries of group-administered instruments in one of four categories: cognitive, perceptual, readiness, and socioemotional. In total, 204 instruments are described.

Souweine, J.; Crimmias, S.; and Mazel, C. *Mainstreaming Ideas for Teachers of Young Children*. NAEYC, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-5786. 1981. $5.00.

This book offers helpful hints for mainstreaming children with handicapping conditions. The suggestions are very practical and deal with a wide range of handicaps, from very mild to very severe.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Coordination of Handicapped Services in Head Start*. Chapel Hill Outreach Training Project, Lincoln Center, Merritt Hill Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, In Press.

This is comprehensive and practical guide for Coordinators of Handicapped Services in Head Start. Includes a set of sample forms, regulations, and other resource materials.

Wolfe, Barbara L.; Griffin, Maureen L.; Zeger, Jordana D.; and Herwig, Julia. *Development and Implementation of the Individual Service Plan in Head Start* (TEACH). Cooperative Educational Service Agency No. 12, (626 East Slifer Street, P.O. Box 564) Portage, WI. 1982.

Developed by Portage Project TEACH (Training for Educators and Administrators of Children with Handicaps), this training guide is intended to disseminate information so that Head Start programs can continue to upgrade their capability to provide quality services to all Head Start children, particularly those with handicapping conditions. Topics covered include screening, diagnosis, educational and family assessment, development and implementation of the Individual Service Plan, and transitioning.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

"Arranging the Classroom: Case Study of the High/Scope Preschool." High/Scope Press, 600 North River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197-2898. $35.00. Fifteen-minute color filmstrip and cassette tape.

A teacher from the High/Scope Preschool describes attempts to arrange and equip her classroom to give children opportunities to exercise emerging cognitive abilities that are critical to the formation of more mature modes of thinking. She discusses the changes in classroom structure and equipment during the course of the year.

"Classroom Structure and Equipment." High/Scope Press, 600 North River Street, Ypsilanti, MI 48197-2598. $175.00 purchase, $16.00 rental. 8-minute, 16-mm color film.

This film addresses the structure of the classroom and the organization of materials, both crucial considerations in the design of a preschool program. It discussed how to divide the classroom into work areas (interest centers), how to equip these areas, and how to arrange materials to encourage children's thinking.

Dodge, Diane Trister. *Room Arrangement As a Teaching Strategy*. Teaching Strategies, 6407 32nd St. NW, Washington, DC 20015. 1977. $35.00.

This practical training package includes a filmstrip, cassette, and booklet on how room arrangement and the display of materials affect children's behavior and ability to learn. Cassette is also available in Spanish.

Harms, Thelma, and Clifford, Richard M. *Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale*. Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027. 1980. $7.95; $5.95 for 30 scoring sheets.

This rating scale gives an overall picture of the environment including use of space, materials, and experiences to enhance children's development. Seven areas are covered, including children's personal care routines, creative activities, social development, and adult needs. The publication includes forms for assessing the environment and detailed descriptions of how to rate each item from inadequate to normal, good, and excellent.

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIPS

Honig, Alice S. *Love and Learn: Discipline for Young Children*. NAEYC, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-5786. 1985. Available for $.25.

This article traces the stages of development and discusses what children need from adults, how to promote self-control, and how to handle typical difficulties in positive and supportive ways.

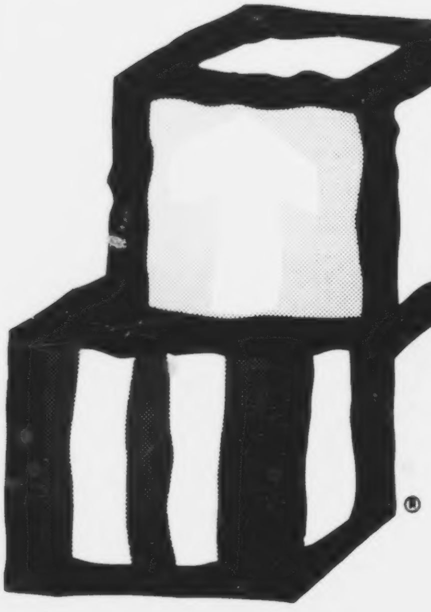
Stone, Jeannette. *A Guide to Discipline* (revised edition). NAEYC, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-5786. 1978. $2.00.

This easy-to-read booklet explains briefly and clearly the purpose of discipline, how to avoid problems, what to do when behavior problems occur, and how to talk with children. It provides sample responses to use in various situations.

Warren, Rita M. *Caring: Supporting Children's Growth*. NAEYC, 1834 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20009-5786. 1977 (NAEYC No. 213). $3.00.

This short book promotes respecting children's intelligence and integrity as a means of encouraging the growth of well-disciplined, caring children. It provides strategies for sharing strengths and acknowledging each child's capabilities.

V. Administering the Education Component



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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR FOR ADMINISTERING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

- Promoting staff understanding of policies and procedures and ensuring that the Education Component adheres to these policies and procedures.
- Participating in the development and refinement of local policies and procedures that guide the Education Component.
- Reviewing records for the Education Component and ensuring that other records kept by the education staff are maintained as required.
- Designing and maintaining a system for tracking all activities in the component to ensure that the Education Component Plan and the program's policies and procedures are being followed.
- Ensuring that the staff and parents are involved in tracking activities.
- Ensuring that the classroom and outdoor play areas meet requirements for a safe and healthy environment.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Obtain a copy of the program's policies and procedures and review them.
- Discuss with the Director what tracking systems are in place for the Education Component and what is expected of each coordinator.
- Find out what records are kept in the Education Component, who is responsible for keeping them, and where they are kept.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: ADMINISTERING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

	Yes	Needs My Attention
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES		
1. Do I coordinate with others to develop program procedures?		
a. component coordinators	______	______
b. staff	______	______
c. parents	______	______
d. the Director	______	______
2. Are program policies and procedures:		
a. in written form?	______	______
b. clearly stated?	______	______
c. shared with all staff, parents and volunteers?	______	______
RECORD KEEPING		
3. Have I developed effective record-keeping forms?	______	______
4. Do I periodically review children's records to ensure that they are complete and up to date?	______	______
5. Are records that need to be confidential so indicated and kept in a locked file?	______	______
OVERSEEING FACILITIES		
6. Do I monitor the health and safety of the classrooms and playgrounds?	______	______
7. Do I use a standard checklist to oversee facilities and is it tied to standards?	______	______
TRACKING		
8. Have I developed a tracking system?	______	______
9. Is there a workable tracking schedule?	______	______
10. Do parents and staff help track and review the component?	______	______

Review your responses, especially those you marked "Needs My Attention," and circle the topics you want to work on. List them below in order of their importance to you.

____

____

____

HEAD START PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies for the Education Component reflect the overall philosophy of Head Start's educational program. They outline the ways in which the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual needs of children will be met and state what is expected of staff.

Procedures are the tools or processes for implementing program policies. They should always be stated clearly in writing and shared with staff, parents, and all volunteers.

THE ORIGIN OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The policies, or requirements, governing the Head Start program come from the Performance Standards and from periodic notices that the regional and national offices send to the Director. Policies also are derived from state, local, and county regulations, which must be met to ensure a safe and healthy environment. These policies are generally found in the state licensing requirements, which can be obtained from the agencies responsible for licensing. They usually address:

- building and space requirements;
- health requirements for staff and children; and
- personnel requirements (such as staff-child ratios and training).

In some cases the Performance Standards can be superseded by a local ordinance, e.g., a zoning or licensing regulation regarding the amount of space required for each child in the classroom. In all cases, programs are to follow the most stringent of the regulations that apply in a local jurisdiction.

Procedures for meeting Head Start policies and local requirements must be developed by individual programs. These procedures must meet the program needs.

DEVELOPING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

In Head Start programs, local program policies and procedures are jointly developed by staff and parents. Education Coordinators work closely with the education staff, parents, volunteers, members of the Policy Council/ Committee, and often with other component coordinators. For example, the Director has operating responsibility for establishing enrollment *policies*, which must then be approved by the Policy Council/Committee. The establishment of enrollment *procedures* is usually the responsibility of the Social Services and Parent Involvement Coordinators. The Education Coordinator might participate and offer suggestions on how the education staff could be involved. All policies are reviewed and approved by the Policy Council/ Committee and some are developed by the Policy Council/ Committee.

The policies and procedures in a given program will depend on several factors including:

- program options;
- total number of children served;
- location of the program, environment, and program calendar; and
- language needs of the families to be served.

For example, all programs need clear policies and procedures regarding picking children up on time. Teachers should have specific instructions or procedures to follow if children are brought too early, or are left at the center past closing time. Home-based staff and parents need a procedure to follow if illness interferes with a visit.

The number of children, and consequently the number of staff, also will affect the policies and procedures developed for the Education Component. For example, programs that provide transportation will need clear policies and procedures to ensure that this goes smoothly. Logistics, bus routes, and emergency plans will be necessary.

The location of the program will dictate some policies and procedures. Programs in areas with a long and snowy winter will need a policy on when the center will be closed. Staff and parents need to know how to find out if the center is closed or opening late.

The policies and procedures described in this chapter relate to the administrative responsibilities of the Education Coordinator. However, there are other policies the program develops that affect the Education Component. These include the following:

- personnel policies;

- health policies (such as dealing with a child who becomes ill);
- food service policies (including mealtime philosophy in Head Start and staff attitudes toward mealtimes); and
- transportation policies (including when and how children are greeted when they arrive at the center and policies referring to home visitors who may be transporting parents and/or children).

HOW PROCEDURES ARE DEVELOPED

Procedures are meant to be useful to those who implement them. They should be simply written and clearly stated. A step-by-step illustration follows.

STEP ONE

Decide the activities for which procedures are needed.

Providing substitute teachers.

STEP TWO

Decide who will write and approve the procedure.

The Education Coordinator will work with the staff and the Director to develop procedures for maintaining a roster of substitute teachers and a system for contacting them.

STEP THREE

Write the procedure. Be as specific as possible.

Procedures for substitutes could include the following.

- Funds will be allocated to pay substitutes the minimum wage.
- All parents will receive a letter at enrollment inviting them to apply to be a substitute.
- Parents will be placed on the substitute roster after attending a training workshop co-sponsored by the Education and Parent Involvement Components.
- Other substitutes will be identified through senior volunteer and employment programs, advertising in the community, and contacting the student employment office at the college. These candidates also will attend training.
- Staff will notify their supervisor by 7:30 a.m. that they are ill and cannot come to work. The supervisor will contact the substitute.
- When a teacher is absent, the assistant will take his/her place. The substitute will then serve as an assistant.
- When an assistant is absent, the substitute will take his/her place.
- Procedures will be reviewed and updated each year.

STEP FOUR

State who is responsible for monitoring the procedure.

Education Coordinator.

STEP FIVE

Identify and develop any forms needed to implement this procedure.

The Director will modify job application forms to include information about when the substitute is available to work.

STEP SIX

Check the procedure against appropriate Head Start policies.

STEP SEVEN

Share the rough draft of the procedures with appropriate persons.

STEP EIGHT

Revise the procedure as necessary.

STEP NINE

Include the procedures in a written manual that is distributed to all staff, parents, and volunteers and is periodically reviewed and updated.

STEP TEN

Complete the procedures manual by including all of the following information for each procedure listed:

- who is responsible for carrying out the procedure;
- who is responsible for overseeing the procedure;
- all forms and instructions needed to carry out the procedure;

- steps to take if the procedure does not work; and,
- documentation required and disciplinary action to be taken if procedure is not followed.

WHAT TO DO IF A PROCEDURE DOESN'T WORK

Sometimes a procedure doesn't work—the staff or parents are not following the procedure or are constantly asking questions about it.

There may be several reasons why a specific procedure isn't working.

- It was developed without the input of staff and parents.
- It isn't specific enough; it doesn't tell staff how to handle a specific situation.
- It is so specific that it is cumbersome and time consuming and no one follows it because there isn't enough time.
- It doesn't meet the needs of the program.
- The training was inadequate or not provided at all.

When this occurs, the procedures should be reviewed with input from parents and staff, and in some cases, with the Director and other coordinators. Even when the procedures seem to be working, it is a good idea to review them periodically and make additions and changes as needed. Procedures are meant to be helpful; if they are not helping to implement the Education Component Plan, they are to be revised.

ESTABLISHING PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL SITUATIONS

It may be necessary to establish specific procedures to deal with special situations. Such procedures should be developed with the Director and other component coordinators. Below are some examples of these situations, with suggestions for procedures that can be adapted to meet individual program needs based on state regulations and local program requirements.

CHILD ABUSE

A teacher suspects that a child in the class has been abused.

- Find out the local legal requirements for reporting suspected child abuse.
- Identify to whom a staff member should report suspected child abuse.
- Specify how, when, and by whom the local authorities are to be contacted.

CHILD CUSTODY PROBLEMS

A noncustodial parent comes to the center to pick up the child. The child's records specifically state that the noncustodial parent is not to pick up the child at school.

- Separate the child from the parent while dealing with the situation.
- Review written records to see if the child can be released to the parent. If yes, do so.
- If the custodial parent has not provided written permission for the child's release, inform the noncustodial parent that you cannot release the child.
- Develop a procedure to handle the situation if the parent becomes irate or violent (e.g., inform staff that they should try to placate the parent verbally, but if the child is forcibly taken, to call the police and the custodial parent).
- Inform parents of these procedures. They need to know that the staff will do its best to handle these situations, but that if they suspect a problem, they should notify the center ahead of time.
- Try to give the staff words to use to calm a child who is caught in the middle of such an incident (e.g., "We're here to make sure you are safe." "Your parent wants to be with you; he/she loves you."). Try to be soothing and nonjudgmental.

CHILD NOT PICKED UP

At closing time, a child is left at the center, or the bus driver finds no one there when the child is driven home.

- Determine who will handle these problems when they occur (e.g., staff in the center or administrative staff members on call for special problems.)

- Try to contact the parent by phone.
- If the parent cannot be reached, call the emergency numbers in the child's file. Ask if someone will pick up the child.
- Determine where the child should be taken, by whom, and after how long.
- Be sure that parents know about this procedure and that all emergency numbers are accurate and up to date. (Emergency numbers should be verified monthly.)

RECORD KEEPING

Establishing and maintaining accurate records is an important administrative function. There are six primary purposes for efficient record keeping in Head Start.[1]

- **Evaluation.** Record-keeping activities and outcomes assist staff in evaluating the effectiveness of their service delivery to families.
- **Accountability.** Well-kept records provide documentation of the work the staff performs and serve as a measure of accountability.
- **Organization.** A carefully maintained record-keeping system helps staff organize the program, conduct periodic reviews of progress, and plan future activities.
- **Training.** Information in the records can help staff to identify the training and education needs and interests of staff and parents.
- **Research.** Records can provide an excellent source of information about the program for internal and external research efforts.
- **Planning.** The information on program activities and their outcomes provides the basis for planning future activities.

TYPES OF RECORDS

Some of the records required for program operation are outlined in the Head Start Performance Standards, while others are specified in state or local regulations. Still other record requirements will be developed by the Director, the Education Coordinator, and education staff to meet the needs of the individual program.

In general, three types of records need to be maintained:

- information on each child and family;
- information about the overall Education Component; and
- information on other program areas.

Typically, records for each child will be kept at the center and maintained by teachers and the center director. Records for the Education Component are generally maintained by the Education Coordinator. Records the education staff may be asked to help maintain for other components include keeping track of in-kind hours and parent participation. Because some information must be maintained by both the Education Coordinator and center staff, it is important to coordinate record-keeping systems and use forms that are identical or compatible.

THE PROCESS FOR ESTABLISHING A RECORD-KEEPING SYSTEM

- **Step One**—decide what records will be kept and by whom;
- **Step Two**—develop forms for record keeping that will provide the necessary information;
- **Step Three**—devise a way to store records, e.g., use file folders in file boxes, etc.;
- **Step Four**—determine which records must be maintained confidentially in a locked file or cabinet; and
- **Step Five**—review the system periodically and remove unnecessary forms.

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[1] Adapted from: *A Guide for Providing Social Services in Head Start* (Washington, DC: Head Start Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, 1980), p. 29.

WHO KEEPS WHAT RECORDS?

The number of records kept will vary according to the size of the program, how the program operates, who is assigned specific responsibilities, and the number of coordinators in the program. The person responsible for keeping the records may also vary from program to program, but responsibilities are generally organized as follows.

RECORDS KEPT BY THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR

- Education Component Plan
- Training plans for staff and parents
- Staff observations and formal evaluations
- Documentation of staff problems
- Documentation of special needs/problems of individual children
- Component budget and expenditures
- Annual self-assessment
- Grantee/delegate improvement plans

RECORDS KEPT BY THE CENTER DIRECTOR

- Weekly education plans
- Center staff development plan
- Evaluation forms for staff development training
- Attendance records
- Child and staff attendance forms
- Summary reports on the progress of the education program
- Parent volunteer in-kind contribution recording sheet
- Equipment and material inventories
- Emergency cards
- Accident reports

RECORDS KEPT BY STAFF ON INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

- Enrollment forms
- Results of assessments and ongoing observations
- Permission slips
- Custodial records
- Data on child's family
- Parent conference reports
- Individual Education Plans (IEPs)
- Individual plans

RECORDS KEPT IN A HOME-BASED PROGRAM

- Developmental assessment
- Family needs assessment
- Monthly contact log
- Mileage log
- Home visitor records

RECORDS KEPT BY THE HOME-BASED VISITOR

- Weekly home plan
- Time sheet
- Enrollment forms

Records kept by staff on each child that enable the staff to individualize the programs were discussed in the previous chapter.

RECORD-KEEPING TIPS

Listed below are some tips and strategies for helping the staff meet record-keeping requirements.

- Provide training for all education staff on how to use the record-keeping system effectively. Make sure they understand why accurate and complete records are important.
- Establish a policy and procedures for monthly update of emergency cards. Staff should be sure that the person designated by the parent as an emergency contact is willing to do this and understands what is involved.
- Explain the importance of keeping accurate attendance records to the staff. They are typically maintained at the center level and turned in to the Social Services Component. They are extremely important regarding reimbursement for the food program, for determining

the equipment and materials budget, and for maintaining the correct staff-child ratios.

- Provide the staff with forms to help them complete regular observations of the children. Suggest a timetable for completing observations.
- Index cards work well for anecdotal records. Suggest that the staff carry these cards in their pockets to facilitate their use.
- Develop a form for the staff to use when conducting parent conferences and home visits.
- Be sure all forms in the child's file are dated.
- Separate the child's health records from the rest of the folder.
- In cases where the folder contains special instructions, (e.g., a child's allergy) flag the folder to make this information noticeable.
- Mark confidential forms so that they are easily recognizable.
- Staple a checklist inside the file that clearly states what should be there. Train staff to use the checklist to monitor their own files.
- If a child is in Head Start for more than one year, staple all of the previous year's records to the back of the file; use pocket files to separate each year's records; or color code them.
- Check the children's files to determine if there are any problems in the record-keeping system; a random sample of 25 percent should be sufficent.

KEEPING RECORDS CURRENT AND MEANINGFUL

Once the record-keeping system has been established, it must be kept up to date to be useful. It is the Education Coordinator's responsibility to review program records to ensure that information on each child is current.

UPDATING PROGRAM RECORDS

Updating overall program records includes:

- reviewing the Education Component Plan;
- updating and adding to the staff and parent training plan; and
- developing and revising the timetable for staff evaluations and observations.

UPDATING CENTER RECORDS

Review the following records with the center Director and the teaching staff:

- attendance records;
- parent in-kind contribution forms;
- weekly plans;
- home visit plans;
- individual plans for all children (not just IEPs); and
- requests for additional materials and equipment.

UPDATING CHILDREN'S RECORDS

It is the joint responsibility of staff and the Education Coordinator to ensure that all children's records are current. Specifically, they should be reviewed periodically for:

- current medical information;
- parent emergency numbers and information;
- IEPs (for children with handicapping conditions);
- incident reports, accident reports, or special problems; and
- observation forms and anecdotal records.

MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY

Each Head Start Program should establish clearly marked, locked, confidential files. The procedures for access should be written down and given to staff and parents to avoid problems. The *Head Start Health Coordinators Manual* includes a sample accessibility roster.

TRANSFERRING CHILDREN'S RECORDS

When children leave the Head Start Program to enter elementary school, some of the records can be forwarded. Also, it may be useful to get the records of children who attended another preschool before Head Start. In most cases, if the child's medical records are current, these can be useful to the school system. In other cases, the school may request observation forms, pre- and post-assessments, or summary progress notes. In deciding what records should be forwarded to the child's new school, the following procedures should be considered.

- Ask parents if they wish their children's records to be forwarded. If so, get written permission.
- Schedule a meeting with the kindergarten teachers or principals of the schools involved to discuss the transition and what kinds of records they would find useful.
- Clarify with the Director and Policy Council/ Committee which records are confidential and may only be forwarded with the parents' signed permission, e.g., the results of a psychological evaluation or family referral to social services staff.
- Discuss with the school staff the information Head Start maintains on children and offer to transfer the records.
- Try to inform the school system about the records Head Start maintains. Some school systems are reluctant to accept other schools' records and prefer to develop their own.

Working with elementary school system staff regarding transfer of records also provides an opportunity to share with them the goals and objectives of the Head Start educational program. (Establishing linkages with the schools was discussed in Chapter IV.)

TRACKING THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

Education Coordinators need to keep track of what is going on in the Education Component to determine if the program is proceeding according to the schedule described in the Education Component Plan.

Education Coordinators track or review activities every day. These activities include overseeing planning for the Education Component; implementing the Education Component Plan; and evaluating the program, the training of staff or parents, or the work of the staff.

PURPOSES OF REVIEWING ACTIVITIES

There are three major reasons for ongoing review of activities that apply to all of the Head Start components: To **improve the quality of the services** offered by the Education Component through:

- setting higher standards for performance;
- identifying staff and parent training needs; and
- making recommendations on necessary changes to the Director.

To **measure progress** toward achieving program goals and objectives so that:

- when progress is not sufficient, new strategies can be implemented;
- when activities are on track, staff can be evaluated positively; and
- allocation of resources—money, staff expertise, materials, equipment, and time—can be reviewed.

To **ensure compliance** with:

- the Head Start Performance Standards and other federal policies;
- federal or state laws;
- applicable local government requirements; and
- local program policies and procedures.

AREAS REVIEWED

All areas of the Education Component are reviewed. Examples of questions an Education Coordinator might ask to track progress in each area are listed below.

PLANNING

- Are parents involved in the process?

- Does the plan address all the Head Start Performance Standards for the Education Component?
- Is the plan based on the results of the Community Needs Assessment?
- Have appropriate options been recommended?
- Are the self-assessment findings addressed?
- Are staff assignments appropriate?
- Are the time lines reasonable?
- Is the plan reviewed annually and updated when necessary?
- Is the plan being used to guide the program?

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

- Does the education staff understand the curriculum and are they implementing it appropriately?
- Does the physical environment support program goals and meet the needs of individual children?
- Are long-range and weekly plans prepared and used?
- Does the selection of materials reflect an understanding of developmental abilities and individual needs?
- Is the daily schedule well balanced, with sufficient time for free play and transitions?
- Does the staff understand and use discipline that supports the development of self-control?
- Does the staff provide an individualized program for each child?
- Are parents involved in planning and implementing the daily program?

ADMINISTRATION

- Are records on individual children and families current and complete?
- Are facilities safe and healthy according to the Performance Standards and local requirements?
- Does the staff understand emergency procedures?
- Are there enough supplies on hand to meet the needs of the education staff?

SUPERVISION

- Do staff meetings promote open communication and sharing?
- Do classroom observations occur as scheduled?

TRAINING

- Does the program support the CDA credentialing process?
- Are individual staff training plans being implemented?
- Do training evaluations guide future planning?
- Is training offered in response to a needs assessment?
- Is there documentation of each training event?
- Are parent training sessions well attended?
- Do classroom volunteers attend training?

The self-assessment for this chapter can also be used to review the activities of the Education Component.

DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING A TRACKING SYSTEM

The task of developing a tracking system or plan is a process shared by the Education Coordinator, the staff, and the parents. Everyone involved in the Education Component is interested in knowing what is going on and in making improvements. Other input can come from the education advisory committee, other component coordinators, and the Head Start Director.

For example, in designing a form to review safety in the classroom, an Education Coordinator might convene a meeting with several teachers, the Health Coordinator, and parents to review the Performance Standards and the Education Component Plan and identify how the program will meet these requirements. Based on this information, a checklist can be developed and shared with all who will help review this aspect of the program.

Once the system has been designed and implemented, parent and staff participation should continue. Responsibilities for reviewing specific activities, Performance Standards, or objectives can be assigned to appropriate staff or parents and training provided.

The format used to record the specifics of the tracking system can be based on the Education Component Plan. Most component plans include the following elements:

- references to the Performance Standards;
- goals;
- objectives;
- strategies;
- the title of the person responsible for the strategy; and
- a schedule for completing each strategy.

Thus, it is possible to see at a glance who is responsible for completing each task and when it should be completed. The tracking system can use a similar format, adding who will review the task and when the review will occur.

Another approach used by Education Coordinators is to develop a **yearly calendar** incorporating tracking, training, staff evaluations, committee meetings, and other administrative functions in a single planning tool. This method allows Education Coordinators to balance their work load. However, it does not provide the level of detail that the first format does.

In addition to a schedule, it is also helpful to identify or devise **tracking forms** for recording information about the various elements of the Education Component. First, identify and review existing forms to determine which are useful, which need revision, and which should be eliminated. Design new forms only when necessary. Examples of tracking checklists are included in the *Resource Papers* for this chapter (V-1-3).

A tracking system should include **procedures for correcting problems**. A staff member or team will be responsible for taking the necessary actions, and follow-up will take place at an appropriate time. Problems related to safety should be addressed immediately. Other problems may require a long-range solution rather than a "quick fix." Table Four shows some appropriate techniques for reviewing the activities of the Education Component.

TABLE FOUR

USING APPROPRIATE TECHNIQUES TO REVIEW THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

Effective reviews rely on open communication, skilled observation, time management, an eye for detail, organization, and leadership. Examples of specific techniques for reviewing some aspects of the Education Component appear below.

TO REVIEW	TECHNIQUE	FREQUENCY
Individualization	Review weekly plans, conduct observations.	Monthly
Parent participation on classroom committee	Read minutes from meetings, observe a meeting, check parent bulletin board and newsletter, ask Parent Involvement Coordinator, discuss informally with parents.	Quarterly
Playground safety	Complete on-site observation using playground safety checklist.	Quarterly
	Have teachers observe for safety also.	Daily
Home visits (center-based)	Observe teacher's home visit, review plans for the visits, talk to parents.	Once a year for each teacher
Home visits (home-based)	Observe home visitors in the home, review plans, talk to parents.	Twice a year for each home visitor
In-kind contributions	A parent volunteer can review records and tally contributions each month, including his/her own.	Monthly

Expenditures for supplies	Project a quarterly budget for supplies and review expenditures monthly. Have staff inform you of needs monthly.	Monthly
Component coordination	Meet regularly with other components to share information. Discuss at component staff meetings.	As scheduled
Staff training session	Have staff evaluate training sessions in writing and discuss their reactions later at a staff meeting.	As needed

OVERSEEING FACILITIES[2]

ENSURING A SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

The key to ensuring a safe and healthy environment is appropriate supervision. Without attentive adult supervision, no environment is safe for small children. Not all accidents can be prevented, but accident prevention must be constantly on the minds of all adults in the Head Start program. Safety principles should be shared with the children to alert them to dangers and to avoid accidents. Obvious hazards and risks in the classroom, on the playground, and at home should be eliminated to prevent as many accidents as possible. Program safety must be a top priority for all staff to ensure that hazardous situations are corrected immediately.

Head Start Performance Standards clearly state what must be included in a safe and healthy classroom and play area. State and/or local ordinances should also be checked for applicable safety requirements. The key to overseeing this area is developing a safety checklist that is appropriate for the program. The checklist can be developed with the help of staff and parents. It should be used periodically (no less than quarterly) to ensure that the classrooms and play areas are safe. Any problems noted should be corrected as soon as possible. Children should not be allowed to use faulty equipment or play in unsafe areas. (See V-4-6 in the *Resource Papers* for a sample safety checklist.)

In many Head Start programs, public parks and playgrounds are used in addition to, or in place of, a center playground. These playgrounds should meet the same safety and health requirements as the center playgrounds. When safety hazards are discovered, the local authority responsible for maintaining the park or play area should be notified and asked to correct the problem.

Some Head Start programs incorporate traffic, car, bus, and fire safety in the curriculum. Children learn to observe traffic and bus safety rules, and to buckle their seat belts, when they are available. When education staff ride the buses with the children, they can reinforce safety rules and procedures.

Ensuring safety in the home-based option is more delicate because homes are not required to meet licensing requirements and may, indeed, contain hazards. The key here is to point out these dangers to parents, who may be unaware of many dangers. A sample physical environment checklist for home-based programs is in the *Resource Papers* (V-7).

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[2] Adapted from *The Head Start Health Services Health Coordination Manual* (Washington, DC: Head Start Bureau, Department of Health and Human Services, 1981), pp. III-7-12.

CRITERIA FOR ASSESSING A SAFE AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

Monitoring to ensure a safe and healthy environment involves attention to both classroom and outdoor space.

CLASSROOM

- Are all Performance Standards requirements met? (See No. 1304.2-3.)
- Are licensing requirements met?
- Are the toys and materials used in the classroom:
  - in good repair with no sharp edges, points, or splintering wood,
  - stored separately from the teacher's materials,
  - stored out of the way so that children do not fall on them,
  - age appropriate for the children who will use them (e.g., small parts are not safe for children under three; many toys are labeled according to age),
  - devoid of any plastic wrappings,
  - stored separately according to appropriate age levels (e.g., toys safe only for older children are kept away from those used by the younger children), and
  - made with paints and glues that are nontoxic.

Although the staff has the major responsibility for ensuring safety, children can also be taught basic toy safety rules as part of the ongoing Head Start curriculum. Sample rules the staff might establish include the following.[3]

- Show the teacher any broken toys.
- Play with toys—don't throw them.
- Walk in the classroom. Running is an outside activity.
- Keep toys and other objects out of your mouth.
- Put toys away; don't leave them scattered around—someone might trip.

PLAYGROUND

The key to playground safety is staff supervision. All teaching staff, parents, and volunteers need to be trained to supervise children outdoors.

Children should be taught basic playground safety rules, such as these.[4]

- Older children should not swing on swings designed for younger children.
- Wait until the swing stops moving before getting off.
- Walk around a moving swing.
- Play away from a moving see-saw.
- Wait until the seesaw stops before getting off.

Staff should be sure that:

- All outdoor equipment is in working order.
- Equipment is free of sharp edges, splintering wood, or missing parts.
- They stand near the swings and other playground equipment facing the children at all times.
- A safe area around swings is marked with chalk or tape.
- All swing sets, see-saws, slides, and climbing apparatus are properly installed, anchored, and maintained.
- All play areas are over grass, soft ground, or wood chips.
- The outdoor play area is free of trash, glass, and garbage.
- The outdoor play area is fenced or contained in a way that prevents children from leaving the area unnoticed but allows for an emergency vehicle to get in, if necessary.

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[3] Adapted from *Little Leon the Lizard, Toy Safety Curriculum* (Washington, D.C.: U.S Consumer Product Safety Commission, n.d.).

[4] Ibid.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL ADMINISTERING

- Work with the Director and other component coordinators in developing policies and procedures so that everyone is using the same forms for similar purposes.
- Develop forms for record keeping and institute procedures and guidelines for using them.
- Involve others in the tracking and review process.
- Compile a book of all forms used by the program and the procedures for using them. Be sure it is updated periodically and available to all staff.
- Be sure all education staff understands the policies and procedures that guide the program.
- Think through what policies and procedures are needed to guide the Education Component. Check this list against what exists and discuss any remaining needs with the Director.

RESOURCES

A Guide for Providing Social Services in Head Start. Washington: GPO (DHHS Publication No. (DHDS) 84-31188), 1980. To obtain copies, contact the regional office.

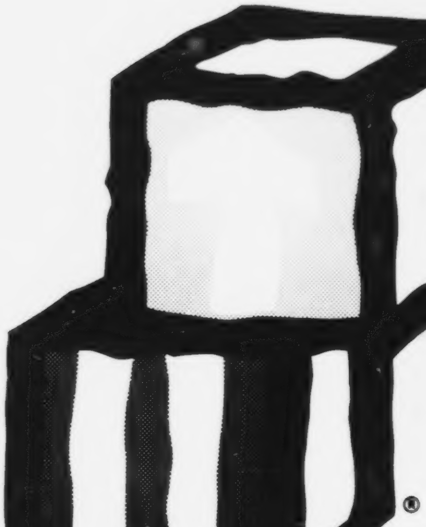
This guide describes the functions of the Social Services Component in Head Start, the staff's roles and responsibilities, and the social service process. Elements of the social services program are also summarized.

Wilson, Gar B. *Humanics Limited System for Record Keeping*. Humanics Limited, P.O. Box 7447, Atlanta, GA 30309. 1981.

This package presents and explains a record-keeping system, offers guidelines for assessing and planning, and provides sample forms that can be used to maintain comprehensive records.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is a good source of pamphlets on ensuring a safe environment. Booklets and pamphlets address safe materials and equipment. Write to: The Consumer Product Safety Commission, Washington, DC 20207

VI. Supervising the Education Component Staff



VI. SUPERVISING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT STAFF

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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR FOR SUPERVISION

- Setting, clarifying, and communicating job standards for the Education Component to staff and parents.
- Supporting and promoting the Head Start Performance Standards and local standards applicable to Head Start.
- Establishing and maintaining written and verbal communication systems within the Education Component.
- Convening regularly scheduled staff meetings.
- Providing individualized supervision based on continual assessment of the skills, knowledge, motivation, and attitudes of staff.
- Conducting regular observations of staff performance and providing feedback to staff.
- Conducting formal staff performance evaluations according to the program's policies and procedures.
- Providing assistance and support to staff whose performance does not meet the job standards for the Education Component.
- Recommending staff termination when staff performance does not or cannot improve.
- Assisting teachers to develop their own supervisory skills.
- Establishing and implementing procedures for orienting and supervising Education Component volunteers.
- Keeping up with the field of early childhood education and sharing information with staff.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Review the program's personnel policies.
- Review the job descriptions for all education staff (including the Education Coordinator's).
- Review the Education Component's policies and procedures.
- Summarize personal values and beliefs about effective supervision and commonly used supervisory techniques.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION

	Yes	Needs My Attention
ESTABLISHING AND COMMUNICATING STANDARDS		
1. Have I made it clear what is expected of staff in terms of job performance?	______	______
2. Do the job descriptions for Education Component staff accurately state the responsibilities for each position and the standards for successfully carrying out these responsibilities?	______	______
MOTIVATING STAFF		
3. Do I communicate respect for individual staff members?	______	______
4. Do I keep staff informed of what is going on in the program?	______	______
5. Do I give staff the authority to make as many decisions as possible?	______	______
INDIVIDUALIZING SUPERVISION		
6. Do I continually assess each staff member's supervisory needs and provide supervision accordingly?	______	______
7. Do I provide staff with an orientation to individualized supervision?	______	______
EVALUATING STAFF PERFORMANCE		
8. Do I allow staff to participate in setting goals and in deciding how to achieve them?	______	______
9. Do I conduct classroom observations and provide feedback on a regular basis?	______	______
10. Do I record observations objectively?	______	______
11. Have I made home visit observations?	______	______
DEALING WITH PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS		
12. Do I analyze what is causing performance problems before deciding what to do about them?	______	______
13. Do I recommend staff termination when it is in the best interest of the children and families?	______	______

	Yes	Needs My Attention
HELPING TEACHERS SUPERVISE		
14. Do I help teachers develop their own supervisory skills?	______	______
15. Are the volunteers in my program given a job description and clear expectations for job performance?	______	______
16. Have I helped home visitors better utilize parent help during socialization sessions?	______	______

Review your responses, especially those you marked "Needs My Attention," and circle those you want to work on. List them below in order of their importance to you.

____

____

____

EFFECTIVE SUPERVISION IS BASED ON JOB STANDARDS

People are most comfortable and productive in situations in which the standards and expectations of the organization and of the supervisor are clearly communicated and understood. Clear standards for job performance help the Education Coordinator function effectively. They are used as objective criteria to guide observations of staff and as a basis for conducting performance appraisals. Job standards also contribute to positive communication between the Education Coordinator and the staff because the staff knows what is expected of them.

SOURCES OF JOB STANDARDS

One of the most important tasks an Education Coordinator undertakes is to identify or establish clear job performance standards for each member of the Education Component staff. Some of these job standards are based on **national requirements**, such as the Head Start Performance Standards and the Child Development Associate (CDA) Competencies, which specify the level of performance expected. The CDA Competencies are applicable to all teaching staff: those who already have their CDA credentials, those working toward them, and those with degrees in early childhood education.

Local program requirements also define job standards for the Education Component. Every teacher, assistant, home visitor, and volunteer should have a job description that accurately states the job responsibilities and the standards for successfully carrying out these responsibilities. (Writing job descriptions is discussed in more detail in Chapter III of this guide.) However, job descriptions are not detailed enough to address specific job standards, such as quality, quantity, frequency, process, and (when appropriate) the time frame for completing each task. These are specified in written policies and procedures and in daily communications. Some job standards are developed through the participatory management process—staff meetings, work groups, Policy Council/Committee meetings, etc. Others come from the Director, the Education Coordinator, the grantee/delegate Executive Director, and the community.

In addition to job performance standards based on national and local program requirements, supervisors may have expectations concerning staff performance based on **their own experiences, values, and priorities** and on their **knowledge of early childhood education**. Communicating these to staff and parents is often difficult because the Education Coordinator cannot refer to specific requirements, such as the Head Start Performance Standards. Instead, the Education Coordinator assumes the role of an assertive, credible leader, using training or demonstrations to convince the staff that a given job standard is appropriate.

WHAT JOB STANDARDS INCLUDE

Performance standards for the education staff are explicit in job descriptions. This is one reason why clear and accurate job descriptions, tied to the Education Component Plan, are so important. Job standards for home visitors and classroom staff will cover the home or classroom environment, use of materials, planning, discipline, individualization, working with volunteers, and appropriate teaching behaviors, to mention a few topics.

Job standards and expectations should reflect a balance between the quantity of work to be completed and the quality. They also may include additional performance criteria:

- the frequency of performance—how often;
- the process used—how and by whom; and
- the time frame—when.

For example, job standards concerning the development of weekly plans might be reflected in the following statements.

- Using the program's established planning formats, teachers prepare complete long-range plans one month in advance and complete weekly plans.
- Teachers develop plans that identify objectives and reflect the curriculum. Teachers include parents, classroom staff, and volunteers in the planning process.
- Each Friday, teachers submit copies to the Education Coordinator and post the plans in the center.

The performance criteria for these job standards are:

- Frequency
    - monthly and weekly.

- Process
  - using standard format,
  - involving assistants and volunteers, and
  - posting the plans in the center.
- Time Frame
  - each Friday.
- Quality
  - complete,
  - use standard format,
  - identify objectives, and
  - reflect curriculum.

A program may also have job standards related to staff members' interactions with each other. These include cooperation, collaboration, communication, and response to feedback. Other job standards may address personal behavior such as judgment, overall attitude, adaptability, and willingness to grow. These job standards are subjective, harder to define, and therefore harder to communicate to the staff. Assessment of performance with regard to these subjective job standards must be based on **observed** and **documented** behavior. For example, when providing feedback to an individual about an inappropriate attitude, the Education Coordinator needs to give several examples of incidents where this was observed.

COMMUNICATING JOB STANDARDS TO PARENTS AND STAFF

Job standards can be communicated in three ways: in writing, by modeling behaviors, and by "selling" beliefs and values.

WRITING

Many of the job standards for Education Component staff are clearly stated in the written documents that help the Director and the Education Coordinator manage the program. In addition to the Performance Standards and job descriptions already mentioned, job standards can be found in:

- the curriculum;
- the Education Component Plan;
- the personnel policy manual;
- program policies and procedures;
- performance evaluation forms;
- the parent handbook; and
- the CDA Competencies.

It is important to have copies of these written materials available for staff and parents. Staff members should have their own copies of the personnel policies, their own job description, and job descriptions for those they supervise. Parents each receive a parent handbook, and Policy Council/Committee members receive other program documents on request. Also, every center needs a copy of the latest Education Component Plan. This can be kept in a prominent place so that the staff and parents can use it. This conveys the message that it was written to be used. Written communication of job standards also includes posting signs throughout the center in obvious places to inform and remind parents and staff about upcoming events, policies, menus, resources, duties, or schedules.

MODELING

It is very important to stress that setting standards is part of an ongoing process of assessing staff and program effectiveness. Standards help control daily program activities and provide goals for staff. Communicating the program's job standards is part of this ongoing process. Every time a supervisor holds a staff meeting or engages in a conversation with a staff member or a parent, he/she is communicating something about job standards.

For example, supervisors model job standards by:

- asking a home visitor to share a design for a successful activity with another home visitor; this conveys the standards related to the activity and to staff collaboration;
- sending a memo stating that activities incorporating sound nutrition should occur at least once a week;
- calling staff to remind them of the classroom observation schedule; this models the standards for notifying staff of observations in advance; and
- scheduling a staff meeting for 3:00 but not beginning it until 3:15; this conveys that the standard for punctuality may not be consistently applied.

SELLING

Sometimes communicating job standards will involve persuading the parents and staff that the Education Coordinator's approach or method is the most appropriate one. It is always better to promote voluntary compliance with standards rather than making compliance compulsory. Ideas can be sold by modeling, providing examples, documenting the results to be gained, or by allowing discussion and compromise.

Some examples of selling might be:

- providing resources on a topic that needs to be emphasized;
- sending copies of an appropriate article to all staff; and
- role-playing a situation to emphasize a point of view.

MOTIVATING STAFF

When adults find that their own growth and development is nurtured on the job, they are more likely to provide a supportive environment for the children. Adults need to be motivated, encouraged to communicate their feelings and ideas, and supported in their efforts to grow and develop professionally. The Education Coordinator's ongoing support enables the staff to implement the Education Component Plan and meet the overall goals of the component. Motivating staff to do their jobs well and to continue their professional growth is an important part of staff supervision.

Many supervisors make the mistake of assuming that each member of the staff is motivated by the same factors; often they assume that the most important of these is money. However, motivation studies as far back as 1959 have shown that staff are motivated by opportunities for achievement and by recognition of their achievement.[1] In a recent study of 100,000 employees from janitor to chief executive officer, respondents ranked the following factors as those that most motivated them to do their best:[2]

- respect for one as a person;
- good pay;
- opportunity to do interesting, challenging work;
- feeling that the job is important;
- a large amount of freedom on the job; and
- participation in planning and decision making.

Good pay is the motivational factor that is most difficult for Head Start supervisors to employ. However, it is possible to provide the other five factors through supervisory attitudes and behaviors.

Some methods used by Education Coordinators to motivate staff include **promoting staff growth and development, establishing avenues for open communication**, and **promoting teamwork**. These three topics are discussed below.

PROMOTING STAFF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Effective Education Coordinators respect individual staff members, communicate this respect, and serve as advocates for the entire education staff. They are willing to stand behind staff when they agree with them, even though it may mean disagreeing with the Director or other component coordinators.

Education Coordinators also demonstrate support for staff by acknowledging that adult needs and children's needs may sometimes conflict. They listen to staff concerns, taking each complaint or grievance seriously, and search for equitable solutions.

Education Coordinators also show support for the staff by giving them the authority to make as many decisions as possible. Sharing and delegating decisions demonstrates respect for the skills and competence of the staff.

Education Coordinators have a large responsibility; if they are not careful, the staff may come to see them as the source of all information, the solvers of all problems, and the only ones who know what is going on. Although it is important to establish a leadership role, the Education Coordinator also needs to share that leadership so that staff can develop and grow. It is not conducive to staff development for the Education Coordinator to continually accept responsibility for solving problems.

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[1] Frederick Herzberg, et al., *The Motivation to Work* (New York: Wiley and Sons, 1959), pp. 59-60.

[2] Barbara Peters, "Careers: What Makes People Run," *The Washington Post*, January 30, 1980, p. B-5.

> If your door is always open to everyone who has a monkey on his back to come in and leave it, at the end of the day you will have a room full of monkeys. To encourage teachers to accept greater responsibility, require that anyone coming to your office with a problem also come in with one or two solutions.[3]

The following are suggested ways to support the achievements of the staff.

Let the staff know they can ask for support. Encourage the staff to ask for support and assistance. Support can be provided by peers or by the Education Coordinator. Establish a time at staff meetings when requests for assistance can be made and promises of support offered. Support can take the form of providing a helpful book or article, coming to the classroom to observe and then giving feedback, having a one-to-one problem-solving discussion, or making a weekly phone call to hear how things are going.

Make it clear that asking for help is not a sign of weakness; it may be considered a sign of strength. Staff who acknowledge the need for input and support from others are to be commended.

Exhibit confidence in the staff. When supervisors have high expectations for what the staff can accomplish, these expectations are usually met or exceeded. When teachers or home visitors are seen as having the ability to lead training sessions for their peers, they will develop the self-confidence needed to plan and conduct such a session.

Staff who are not expected to do well will not develop. There is often a tendency to give up on certain individuals, lowering expectations for performance. Typically this results in an unmotivated individual who is not receiving the support and encouragement needed for growth.

Listen to and deal effectively with complaints. It is important to take the time to handle concerns and complaints before they become problems. Staff members feel more important when their complaints are taken seriously. Conversely, it hurts when others view a personally significant problem as trivial. A teacher's concern about a shortage of paint for the classroom is easier to address when it is first raised than it will be when the concern grows into a complaint about the inadequacy of all consumable classroom supplies.

ESTABLISHING AVENUES FOR OPEN COMMUNICATION

Effective and open communication begins with Education Coordinators defining and accepting their own roles and acknowledging the individual importance of each staff member. For the Education Coordinators to define their roles, it is necessary to know about the activities of the whole program.

When Education Coordinators feel secure about their positions in the Head Start program, this feeling will be conveyed to staff. A sense of security helps to promote open communication.

It is important to make the effort to get to know staff in both a personal and professional sense and to appreciate each person's individuality. When individual strengths and needs are identified, staff can be encouraged to use each other as resources. There are many experts in every Head Start program.

Staff members also need opportunities to get to know the Education Coordinator, who is a role model for staff behavior. Being a model of open communication lets staff know the value of openly sharing ideas and feelings.

The following suggestions can help foster an atmosphere of open communication within the component.

Allow staff to contribute to meeting agendas. Post a sheet of paper so that staff can list items they want on the staff meeting agenda. This assures staff that their concerns will be addressed directly.

Establish credibility by being available to staff and parents. Avoid being trapped in the office or focusing entirely on paperwork. Structure specific times to be with staff, children, and parents, and pitch in and help during a crisis or special event. Arrange times to interact with the children. Build rapport with staff by getting to know the children and the quality of their interactions. Attend parent functions, such as center, classroom, or home-based meetings. Establish specific times when staff can call or come by to discuss problems, concerns, or successes.

Develop effective writing and verbal skills. Present complete thoughts using short sentences and clear, simple, precise language. Write or speak to express an idea, not to impress an audience.

Show concern for staff. Staff must have access to the Education Coordinator and know he/she is willing to listen. Write reminders to ask about the outcome of Mrs. Jones' field trip or Mark's father's operation (don't depend on memory). Circulate relevant memos and letters, and arrange an occasional staff event, such as a potluck dinner.

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[3] "Staff Training: Keys to Affective Staff Development," *Child Care Information Exchange* (January/February 1983), pp. 20-21.

Hold individual meetings with each staff member. These periodic meetings are an opportunity for staff to discuss how things are going and to voice their concerns. They are not used for providing feedback on job performance.

Be clear about standards. Be consistent in applying program policies and regulations, and be consistent in using sanctions and censure. Be prepared to sacrifice the less important for the more important.

PROMOTING TEAMWORK

No single person can possibly do all the work of the component alone. Effective Education Coordinators know how to promote teamwork and to share and delegate responsibilities. They do this through their continued use of participatory management. Staff are involved in developing the Education Component Plan, they participate in regular staff meetings, are empowered to make decisions about things that affect them, and are encouraged to work together as a team.

Effective Education Coordinators are good facilitators. "Facilitator" usually refers to the role of a group leader. It is used in that sense here because Education Coordinators continually engage in facilitative behavior. They encourage staff to work cooperatively by asking them to share their ideas with each other. Education Coordinators use conflicts as an opportunity to produce beneficial results. They help the staff focus on the child and family, even during disagreements. They encourage staff to share problems so that their peers can assist them in finding solutions. Education Coordinators also meet with teaching teams to help them work out their own strategies, and they help teachers learn to supervise classroom staff and volunteers.

AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH TO SUPERVISION

Individualization is an underlying theme in Head Start, whether planning for or interacting with the children, the parents, or the staff. Each staff member brings a unique set of skills, experiences, abilities, knowledge, needs, and attitudes to the program. No two individuals need exactly the same type and level of support. People respond in different ways, and their needs for supervision range from explicit guidance to freedom and support necessary to develop their own solutions.

Individualized supervision is an effective way to respond to each staff member's unique needs and strengths. Although job standards define expectations that apply to all staff, teaching is an art, and each individual's teaching style is a unique expression of personality, values, skills, and experiences. It is important to allow staff the freedom to develop their own styles. This means acknowledging that different styles can be equally effective in bringing about desired results, as long as the program follows sound early childhood development principles.

An individualized approach to supervision is particularly appropriate in an educational setting such as Head Start. The Education Component staff is a diverse group. This diversity should be assessed by the Education Coordinator and supervisory behavior adjusted accordingly.

An individualized approach to supervision relies on the Education Coordinator's ability to recognize and understand the different strengths, needs, and confidence levels of the staff. This includes using a broad repertoire of supervisory styles and behaviors. An effective Education Coordinator does not expect all staff to conform to a specific model for behavior.

Providing individualized supervision does not mean that expectations for performance or job standards are changed to suit the needs and skills of an individual staff member. Job standards remain the same for everyone; however, the supervisory method for assisting the individual in meeting the job standards will vary. Supervising an inexperienced or unmotivated individual requires the Education Coordinator to spend a great deal of time letting the person know what to do, how and when to do it, etc. The supervision provided to a more skilled and motivated staff person is likely to be less time consuming, and will include providing support and encouragement, joint problem solving, and serving as a resource.

USING AN INDIVIDUALIZED APPROACH

There are three principles to keep in mind when using an individualized approach to supervision. First, avoid misunderstandings by providing staff with an orientation to the concept and approach in advance. Second, continually assess staff skills and needs. Finally, periodically re-examine the effectiveness of the supervision provided to each individual and make necessary adjustments.

STAFF ORIENTATION TO THE APPROACH

Individualized supervision should be explained to the staff in advance. Staff can provide information about their needs to add to the impressions of the Education Coordinator. An open discussion about individualized supervision may also help staff understand that effective supervision is tailored to the needs of the individual.

CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT OF STAFF

Individualized supervision relies on the careful and continuous assessment of the skills, abilities, motivation and confidence of each member of the staff. The Education Coordinator needs accurate and current information about each staff member in order to provide the most useful supervision. This information comes from a variety of sources, such as classroom observations, staff meetings, performance evaluations, feedback from parents, individual conferences, training needs assessments, and reviews of lesson plans.

PERIODIC EXAMINATIONS OF EFFECTIVENESS

Individualized supervision also relies on the Education Coordinator's periodic examinations of the effectiveness of the supervisory approaches being used. Perhaps a staff member needs more structure until his/her motivation and self-confidence increase, or conversely, perhaps he/she is ready for a less directive approach. A staff member who has made considerable progress may be very frustrated if the Education Coordinator continues to provide detailed instructions and frequently calls to ask if tasks have been completed. One way to acknowledge each person's growth is to adjust the supervision provided to conform with new levels of skills and confidence.

A periodic review of the supervisory approach being used also will help to avoid situations in which the staff becomes dependent on the Education Coordinator's assistance instead of developing more self-confidence. The Education Coordinator can encourage staff members to develop their skills and implement their own solutions. Follow up can then focus on reinforcing these independent actions.

EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUALIZED SUPERVISION

Examples of individualized supervision appear below. The two staff members discussed have similar needs; however, the Education Coordinator provides assistance tailored to each person's level of skill and self-confidence.

STAFF MEMBER A

An experienced staff member is having difficulty developing activities to help a withdrawn child become more involved with the other children and adults in the classroom. She requests the assistance of the Education Coordinator in dealing with this situation. Because this teacher has the skills needed to handle the situation, the Education Coordinator's assistance takes the form of support rather than instruction. She listens to the teacher, asking probing questions that help define the problem. Together they brainstorm different approaches and a variety of activities to try with the child. A week later, the Education Coordinator calls to ask how things are going and to provide follow-up support and encouragement. At this time, she also tells the teacher to call if further support or assistance is needed.

STAFF MEMBER B

A less experienced staff member is having difficulty getting a withdrawn parent to become more actively involved during weekly home visits. In this instance, the Education Coordinator identifies the situation during a regularly scheduled observation. Although the home visitor has not requested assistance, the Education Coordinator provides an objective account of her observations of both the parent and the home visitor. The home visitor acknowledges that she has not been successful in helping this parent to participate in the home visit activities and asks for suggestions. Rather than simply proposing a solution, the Education Coordinator discusses the situation with the home visitor, helping her to analyze the parent's behavior and her own. In this situation, the Education Coordinator and home visitor work together to develop some individualized approaches and activities. Because this staff member is less experienced and less confident, the Education Coordinator works with the home visitor to develop a plan for implementing the approach. Once a step-by-step approach has been planned, the Education Coordinator expresses confidence in the home visitor's ability to carry out the plan. The next week the Education Coordinator telephones the home visitor to discuss progress and provide continued support. The home visitor reports evidence of progress and feels confident enough to proceed with less supervisory support. The Education Coordinator visits the home one month later, and after this observation is able to give specific, objective examples of how the interactions between the parent and the home visitor have improved.

EVALUATING STAFF PERFORMANCE

Evaluation is the ongoing process that Education Coordinators use to identify staff needs and strengths and to promote staff development. Regular **classroom observations** give clear, objective information that is then used to present **feedback** to staff. The staff member and the Education Coordinator work together to analyze what was observed and to determine which activities and behaviors are effective, and which need to be changed or improved.

Ongoing self-evaluations are also effective. Education staff members need to evaluate themselves frequently, not just when the Education Coordinator has time to make classroom observations. Staff can be trained to serve as peer observers, or to use a self-evaluation checklist to periodically examine their own skills.

It is good practice for Education Coordinators to conduct formal **performance appraisals** for each staff person twice a year. Consult the program's personnel policies and the Director for specific procedures. It is helpful to think of these as joint performance assessments that enable the Education Coordinator and the staff member to take an organized, structured look at the individual's performance and make a judgment about how this performance conforms to the Education Component's job standards.

Here are some points to consider in evaluating staff performance.

- Employees have the right to know how well they are doing and how they can improve their performance.
- An employee who is struggling is anxious to be assured that the supervisor will provide constructive guidance on how to improve performance.
- Employees who are doing an outstanding job want to know that their services are recognized and appreciated.
- An employee's poor performance and failure to improve may be due in part to inadequate supervision; consequently, a formal appraisal may serve to evaluate and improve the supervisor's performance.
- An employee's continued poor performance in spite of supervision may indicate a need to recommend termination of the individual.

ONGOING OBSERVATION OF EDUCATION STAFF

In order to evaluate the performance of the teaching staff, it is necessary to collect accurate information on each person's actual performance working with children and families. Rather than relying on informal glimpses or subjective perceptions of the person's ability, the Education Coordinator should establish a system for observing and recording staff behavior that will yield objective information.

The primary focus during the observation should be the teacher's interactions with the children. The goal is to gain an understanding of what the teacher is doing with the children that can be used as a frame of reference for a feedback conference with the staff member. Observe teachers on different occasions at different times of the day before drawing any conclusions about either the teacher or the classroom.

Observing staff is an integral part of the Education Coordinator's role. The number and length of the observations will depend on the number of staff supervised, the Education Coordinator's own commitment to the activity, and the experience and skills of the staff. It is advisable to establish a regular schedule for observations and conference feedback sessions for each member of the teaching staff. It is suggested that each teacher be observed at least monthly, and each home visitor twice a year. For staff working on a probationary contract or with other special needs, weekly or bimonthly observations are recommended.

When an Education Coordinator initiates a system of formal observation, some staff may feel threatened. It is important to demonstrate that these observations are part of a staff development effort. Observations and feedback are a means of training staff. Success in observing and providing feedback to each staff member will depend to a great extent on the Education Coordinator's relationship with that person; a sense of trust and mutual respect is essential for an effective evaluation.

PREPARING FOR THE OBSERVATION

Before making a visit to conduct an observation, review the procedures and the forms that will be used to record the observation with the staff member involved. Check with the teacher several days before the visit to make sure it is both expected and convenient. If the observation involves a home visit, get the family's permission in advance and make sure they understand the purpose of the visit. Some programs advise families at enrollment that the home visitor's supervisor may occasionally ask to observe the visit.

When observing a home visit, first meet the family members, and briefly explain that the purpose of this visit is to observe the home visitor, not to evaluate the home, children, or parents. When observing in a center, enter the room quietly, so as not to disturb the activities. In either setting, take the first 10 or 15 minutes to become acclimated before starting to write observations. This will also give the staff member, children, and family a chance to get comfortable. Focus on the teacher or home visitor and what he/she says or does. Observe quietly without interrupting. Wait until after the observation to have a discussion with the staff member.

RECORDING OBSERVATIONS

The primary purpose of observation is to provide useful feedback to the education staff. The observations should therefore be clearly recorded so they can be shared during a feedback conference.

Recorded observations should be objective, not judgmental. This is especially important during initial observations when trying to establish a trusting relationship with the staff member. Recording exactly what the person does and says rather than paraphrasing or summarizing incidents facilitates objectivity. Using direct quotes and avoiding judgmental statements will help compile a written picture that can be shared with the staff member and be used to stimulate a discussion of job performance.

There are various methods of recording objective observations of a teacher's behavior. Education Coordinators may simply use a blank piece of paper or may develop a form. Because narrative information is needed, a standard checklist of teaching behaviors is not useful. Sample Form No. 1 in the *Resource Papers* (VI-1) for this chapter is a useful and simple tool for recording observations. This form will help capture vignettes of teaching behavior that can then be grouped by type, such as the CDA Functional Areas. "Recording Objective Observations" in the *Resource Papers* (VI-2-4) provides examples of useful recordings and of some that are not useful. A form to be used when observing home visits is also included in the *Resource Papers* (VI-5).

Some Head Start programs own or have access to videotape equipment, which can be used to objectively record events. Videotape recordings can be extremely effective in making staff members aware of their behavior. No one should be forced to be videotaped, and there may be some initial discomfort, but once the initial awkwardness dissipates, the subject of the taping is usually convinced of the effectiveness of this tool. Videotaping accelerates the process of helping staff improve their interactions with the children.

In addition to collecting objective information, the Education Coordinator will eventually want to begin to evaluate the behavior observed and to make recommendations. Again, recommendations can be written on a blank piece of paper or on a form. Sample Form No. 2 in the *Resource Papers* (VI-6) provides a means of recording the Education Coordinator's and the staff member's reactions to the observation. It is helpful during the feedback conference if both the Education Coordinator and the staff member have made written notes of the observation.

PROVIDING FEEDBACK TO STAFF

The feedback given to a staff member after each observation is key to the supervisory process. In scheduling the observation, always allow some time afterwards for a private discussion of the observation. This time can be used to help the person evaluate current performance, assess growth since the last observation, and develop ways to continue to improve.

Before the feedback conference, organize the observations by CDA Functional Areas or other appropriate categories, such as those used in the job description. This organization will help structure the feedback conference.

The feedback conference can begin by allowing the staff member time to review the objective, recorded observations. Then open the discussion by asking for reactions. This will give the person an opportunity to initiate the discussion and may ease any anxiety. Ask if the teacher or home visitor would like help with a specific activity, child, or parent. If the activities have been objectively recorded, this discussion should proceed as if viewing a videotape of the activities observed. This objectivity will be useful in making judgements during the conference based on specific evidence of behavior. See the *Resource Papers* for suggested techniques for giving feedback (VI-7).

It is important to ask questions about the knowledge, skills, and attitudes involved in any given activity, such as the following.

- How did you decide to take the children to the grocery store?
- What advance preparation did you make and why?
- How did you involve children in the planning?
- How did you plan with other staff and parent volunteers?
- What did the children learn?
- What happened at the cash register?
- How does this relate to understanding numbers?
- How did the parents react?

Additional questions can focus on follow-up activities.

- What activities can you plan that will build on the children's experiences?
- Did you identify any individual needs of the children related to understanding numbers?
- How would you plan and conduct the trip differently if you were to do it again?

Begin by commenting on what went well and why. Make some specific recommendations that include concrete suggestions for developing skills and knowledge further. The recommendations should be areas that the staff member can control and should be as specific as possible. It is helpful to give concrete examples and references and/or to brainstorm new activities, materials, techniques, and routines.

When the strengths, progress, and suggestions for development have been reviewed, a summary of these comments should be written and signed, with each person retaining a copy. This summary can act as a written agreement for training, future planning, and performance evaluation.

PERFORMANCE APPRAISALS

The term "performance appraisal" refers to the formal process used to measure how well a staff member has handled assigned duties and responsibilities during a given period. Because performance appraisals are often tied to rewards or disciplinary actions, staff members may find them threatening and may be apprehensive about them. This is unfortunate because one of the major benefits of performance appraisals is a strengthening of the relationship between supervisor and staff.

One author suggests that performance appraisals be renamed performance analyses.[4] He sees the process as including these criteria:

- joint establishment of six-month goals;
- employee's analysis of his/her accomplishments to meet these goals—substantiated by specific examples;
- review of the self-appraisal by supervisor and employee; and
- joint establishment of new goals.

He goes on to define the supervisor's role as that of a coach, encouraging the staff member to set higher goals and take the necessary steps to achieve them. Given Head Start's emphasis on participatory management and staff development, this is a useful analogy. Two performance analysis systems used by Head Start programs are outlined briefly below.

STAFF EVALUATION PROCEDURES

One Head Start program follows an established schedule for conducting performance appraisals.[5]

By October 31st. Supervisor and employee meet and establish employee work goals for the program year. Two goals are set, plus one specific training goal.

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[4] Douglas McGregor, *Leadership and Motivation* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1966), pp. 191-195.

[5] Rayko Hashimoto, *Oregon Head Start Education Coordinator's Handbook* (Portland State University: Oregon Head Start State Technical Assistance and Training Office, 1983), p. 152.

Supervisor is responsible for input into employee goals—can assign specific goals if appropriate.

By February 15th. Supervisor writes mid-year evaluation that addresses major areas defined. Employee input/comments are included at the bottom of the form to respond to evaluation or to add further remarks. (This session is the main focus for growth-related evaluation because half a program year still remains for incorporating behavior changes.) Employee goals are updated. Progress is noted. New goals are set if the original goals have been met.

By June 3rd. Employee writes a summary of yearly self-evaluation. Supervisor writes summary of yearly evaluation of employee. Employee goals are updated for last time. Progress is noted. Reasons given for not accomplishing goals are recorded.

The education advisory committee of another Head Start program spent two years developing a performance appraisal system based on the CDA Competencies. The Education Coordinator uses the form twice a year after reviewing lesson plans and making a series of classroom observations. A copy of this form appears in the *Resource Papers* (VI-8-16).

KEY ELEMENTS

Whichever performance appraisal system is used, it should include these six key elements.

- **Standard.** Staff members have a clear understanding of what is expected of them—documented in job description.
- **Continuous assessments.** Staff members are informally assessed continually.
- **Schedule.** Formal assessments are scheduled at regular intervals (most programs adhere to a six-month schedule).
- **Record keeping.** Assessment findings are documented.
- **Open communication.** Staff members have an opportunity to discuss their feelings and concerns.
- **Individualization.** Staff members are appropriately rewarded.

Including these six elements in a performance appraisal system promotes positive attitudes about performance appraisal.

DEALING WITH PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

In Head Start, the commitment to staff development also includes a commitment to helping staff overcome performance problems. Rather than assuming that a staff member cannot or will not improve, Education Coordinators work with the individual to analyze and define the problem, set goals, determine strategies for reaching the goals, and agree on methods to be used to monitor progress and determine success. This is not a never-ending process, however, so the consequences of continued poor performance should be clearly communicated. At times, recommending termination of a staff member will be best for everyone involved. A later section of this chapter provides a more detailed discussion of when to recommend termination.

ANALYZING THE CAUSES OF PERFORMANCE PROBLEMS

The following excerpt was written for managers in private industry; it can also apply to Head Start supervisory experiences.[6]

> In a survey I conducted with 4,000 managers who participated in my training programs over the last two years, I asked: "Why don't subordinates do what they are supposed to do?" . . . The responses were as follows.
>
> 1. They don't know what they are supposed to do.
> 2. They don't know how to do it.

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[6] Ferdinand Fournies, *Coaching for Improved Work Performance* (New York: Van Nostrum, 1978), p.77.

3. They don't know why they should.
4. There are obstacles beyond their control.
5. They don't think it will work.
6. They think their way is better.
7. Not motivated—poor attitude.
8. Personally incapable of doing it (personal limits).
9. Not enough time for them to do it.
10. They are working on wrong priority items.
11. They think they are doing it (no feedback).
12. Poor management.
13. Personal problems.

These are listed in the order they are given by managers. The first item on the list is given as an answer, first or second, 99 percent of the time. What is surprising about this is that when managers try to solve individual performance problems they rarely select this first answer as the place to start solving the problem.

This example reinforces the need to analyze the problem before deciding what to do about it. This is an important first step because without it, the supervisor may concentrate on the symptoms rather than dealing with the causes. Education Coordinators cannot simply assume they know what is causing the problem, but will need to gather more information by observing the staff member's job performance and by having a one-on-one discussion with the individual. During this discussion, try to find answers to the following questions.

- Does the individual know what he/she is supposed to do?
- Does the individual know how to do it?
- Does the individual know that his/her performance is unacceptable?
- Are there obstacles beyond his/her control?
- Could the individual improve performance if he/she wanted to?

SETTING GOALS AND DEVELOPING STRATEGIES

Once the problem has been analyzed and defined, the Education Coordinator and the staff member can work together to set goals and develop strategies for improving job performance. These will be developed jointly based on the answers to the questions listed above, as the following examples illustrate.

- If the problem exists because the staff person doesn't understand the job requirements, then a next step will be to review the job description, item by item, until responsibilities and the standards for determining acceptable performance of each task are clearly understood.
- If the problem exists because the staff member doesn't know how to complete a task, then training is an appropriate next step, followed up by a re-evaluation of job performance.
- If the staff person is not aware that his/her performance is unacceptable, then the next step is to provide clear, concise feedback as discussed earlier. Once examples of the poor performance have been presented, then the Education Coordinator can work with the individual to set goals and develop strategies.
- If the problem is caused by obstacles beyond the staff member's control, then an attempt must be made to remove them. For example, if a Center Director cannot keep up with paperwork because she is also teaching a class of 15 four-year-olds, then the Education Coordinator may recommend to the Director that a clerk be hired to help out.
- If the performance is poor over a long period of time and the staff member is not able to improve, then the next step is to consider reassignment or termination.

MONITORING PROGRESS

The steps an Education Coordinator takes to help the individual improve performance must also include discussion and agreement on how progress will be monitored and what constitutes success. Monitoring can include periodic classroom observations, face-to-face conferences, a review of records, or whatever other method seems appropriate. Definitions of success should include a time frame for a final evaluation of whether or not the performance problem has been corrected. The Education Coordinator will continue to provide ongoing feedback for *any* performance improvements, even if the performance does not yet meet the standards for the component. Also, supervisory style will be adjusted as progress is made by the individual.

Education Coordinators may find themselves in situations where the performance problems are caused by poor management or inadequate supervision. Of the 19 reasons given for poor performance in the survey cited earlier, many were directly related to the failings of the supervisor. Frequent self-evaluations will help the supervisor maintain effective attitudes and behaviors. Encouraging component staff to evaluate supervisory performance will also provide information on the effectiveness of the supervision. When the staff is asked to evaluate the Education Coordinator's performance, the latter can discuss the results with the staff and define the personal goals and the strategies to be used to reach those goals.

TERMINATION OF COMPONENT STAFF[7]

Recommending the termination of a staff member is a difficult decision. However, there are a number of specific instances when recommending termination of a staff member is appropriate and necessary. Whenever the needs of the individual staff member come into serious conflict with those of the children, families, and the component as a whole, the staff member should be asked to leave the job. Recommending termination is not the first response to a difficult situation; however, there will be times when poor performance does not improve, despite supervisory support and intervention.

WHEN TERMINATION IS APPROPRIATE

There are four general categories of continued poor performance that may lead to recommending termination. The first is **poor work habits**, such as chronic lateness or absenteeism, shirking job responsibilities, or sloppy or careless work. When a staff member cannot be counted on to arrive at the center on time, the other staff are affected because they must cover for the tardy employee and the children do not receive the attention they need.

Continued job performance that does not meet the program's standards is a second cause for recommending termination. Staff members who cannot perform responsibilities required by the job and are unable to develop the skills needed to implement the educational program may need to be replaced. Although staff development is an essential part of Head Start, from time to time there may be individuals who are not able to learn to do their job. Perhaps working with children is an occupation that is just not suitable for them, or possibly this is a job they don't really want to do. They may need to be counseled out of the field.

A third reason for recommending termination is when a **staff member's behavior is unacceptable because it is detrimental to the children, other staff members, or the parents**. For example, a staff member who strikes or verbally abuses a child is exhibiting unacceptable behavior. The program may have specific policies about such incidents, including provisions for official warnings or other disciplinary measures. In most programs, policies governing unacceptable behavior do not allow for second chances.

Violations of program policies is a fourth category of behavior that may be cause for recommending termination. Examples include stealing or embezzling program funds or property, inappropriate sharing of confidential information, or showing up for work intoxicated. Again, each program has specific policies for dealing with these situations.

STAFF TERMINATION POLICIES

Every program should include guidelines for terminating employees in its personnel policies. These can be developed by a group composed of staff, parents, the Head Start Director, and the appropriate grantee/delegate representative. It's extremely important that all staff members know what behaviors are grounds for termination. Written policies should include grievance procedures, documentation requirements, and clear statements about which behaviors are grounds for immediate termination rather than a written warning or a suspension.

When a staff member's performance is unacceptable and not improving, the first step toward correcting the situation is to schedule a private conference with the employee. During this meeting, the Education Coordinator will:

- specify the policy violations or areas of poor performance;
- give specific, documented examples that demonstrate the violation or poor performance;
- let the staff member know that written records of the conference will be maintained;
- explain clearly what changes the employee must make to avoid being terminated;
- discuss how the employee's efforts to improve will be monitored; and
- state the deadline for final evaluation.

Written records are necessary to document examples of unacceptable performance and discussions and agreements with the employee. These records aid the memory, ensure that the message was conveyed to the employee, and serve as back-up if a decision to recommend termination is made at a later date. Written records also keep the Director informed of the situation so that he/she can provide needed support.

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[7] Based on "Overcoming the Fear of Firing," *Child Care Information Exchange*, (March 1981): 11-15.

When a staff member's performance does not improve, the decision to recommend termination must be based on objective information and observations. Termination decisions shouldn't be made in anger, during a crisis, or under stress. Once the decision is made, the program's policies must be followed.

HELPING TEACHERS SUPERVISE

Just as the Education Coordinator supervises all of the activities of the component, teachers supervise all of the activities of the classroom. Therefore, teachers need opportunities to develop their own supervisory skills. The Education Coordinator helps each teacher assess the skills of assistants and volunteers, use these skills, and develop new skills.

TECHNIQUES TO PROMOTE SUPERVISORY SKILLS

There are a variety of techniques that can be used to help teachers develop supervisory skills. First, Education Coordinators model supervisory behaviors that are seen by all of the staff. Teachers can expand on their own supervisory skills by watching what the Education Coordinator does. This can be followed by discussions with the Education Coordinator.

Supervisors develop their own style based on personality, values, and experience. This style is flexible, however, adapting to the individual needs of those being supervised. This individualization may not be immediately apparent to the teachers, which is why open discussion of supervisory techniques is essential. Explain why a particular approach is used, the purpose, and the long-term goal it addresses. Encourage individuals to use supervisory behaviors that they find most effective.

Education Coordinators can assist teachers in developing their supervisory skills by giving them the power they need to be effective. Empowerment results when teachers are given the authority to make as many decisions as they can about their jobs. This could include decisions related to:

- weekly plans;
- hiring teacher assistants;
- parent education;
- scheduling special activities;
- individualization;
- training volunteers and assistants; and
- purchasing supplies.

Empowering teachers acknowledges that they hold a leadership position in the classroom. This helps them earn the respect of the assistants and volunteers, which in turn helps the teachers build open and supportive classroom environments.

Formal or informal training is also a useful technique for developing teachers' supervisory skills. Any of the supervisory training topics relevant to the Education Coordinator's own development will probably be useful for teachers. Informal training opportunities arise out of ongoing interactions with teachers and from classroom observations. Observations may include a specific emphasis on how the teacher works with the other adults in the classroom. This can take the form of a running record that the observer and the teacher can then discuss. It may also be helpful to schedule regular meetings with all teachers so that they can discuss any supervisory problems they are having in a supportive setting.

Finally, the job standards set for the program assist the teachers in their supervision. These job standards provide teachers with a basis for establishing expectations for the job performance of assistants and volunteers. They can be expanded to deal with the specific activities of the classroom. Also, job descriptions and other standards describe how the members of the teaching team can divide the responsibilities of the classroom.

SUPERVISION OF VOLUNTEERS

Many Head Start parents provide volunteer services to the program, often going on to become staff and CDA candidates. Parent volunteers are a valuable Head Start resource and they should be treated with the same respect due paid employees. This includes a clear definition of their job duties and expectations for their job performance.

As with other Head Start staff positions, the program should have job descriptions for volunteers, a volunteer orientation process, and ongoing training for volunteers. An example of a job description for a classroom volunteer is included in the *Resource Papers* (VI-17). Volunteer training should include input from the other classroom staff so that they fully understand what volunteers are expected to do and how they can help volunteers learn to do their job better. Training volunteers is discussed in the next chapter.

Teachers need to learn about the skills and strengths of their volunteers to make the best use of them. This can be done initially through an interview or by having the volunteer complete an interest inventory. An example of an inventory also appears in the *Resource Papers* (VI-18).

Like the staff, volunteers develop new skills from working in the classroom. Teachers should conduct periodic assessments of a volunteer's performance to identify new skills; the volunteer's role can then be expanded to make use of these skills.

Teachers need to provide volunteers with clear instructions about what they would like them to do when they are in the classroom. Telling volunteers to "just see who needs help" does not use the volunteer's skills, nor does it show respect for the volunteer as an individual. The same motivational factors that apply to staff also apply to volunteers. Even good pay may be a motivation, because many volunteers hope to gain enough experience so that they can move into a paid staff position.

Teachers also need to remember that expectations often govern events. If the program doesn't expect volunteers to show up on time and regularly, then they probably won't. Much better results occur if it is made very clear to volunteers that they are essential members of the teaching team, and expected to be committed to working in the classroom at the agreed-on time. Some programs use a contract or letter of commitment to let volunteers know that their attendance is valued and expected by the program. An example of a commitment memo appears in the *Resource Papers* (VI-19).

Finally, volunteers need to be acknowledged regularly by the people they work with and by other Head Start staff. In addition to ongoing acknowledgements, such as public praise, some programs honor their volunteers at an end-of-the-year event. Although this type of public acknowledgement is much appreciated, the contributions of the volunteers need to be acknowledged every time they come to the classroom, not just once a year.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL SUPERVISION

- Make observations a priority so there is always time to see staff in action.
- Organize observation records so that the feedback given to staff is structured in a useful format.
- Encourage staff to develop their own alternative strategies.
- Implement a performance appraisal system that includes provisions for each staff member to complete a self-assessment.
- Recognize that when a staff member cannot or will not improve performance, termination is the most appropriate response.
- Resist pressures to adjust job standards when they are based on the state-of-the art in early childhood education theory and practices.
- Assess the skills and needs of each staff member frequently so that individualized supervision can be provided.

RESOURCES

Administration: A Bedside Guide. Edited by Susan Stine. Pacific Oaks College and Children's School, 5 Westmoreland Place, Pasadena, CA 91103. 1983.

This is a collection of articles written by administrators who work in a variety of preschool settings. Authors share their personal experiences, describing their own approaches to supervision, leadership, and management. The examples and suggestions provided are practical solutions to common problems.

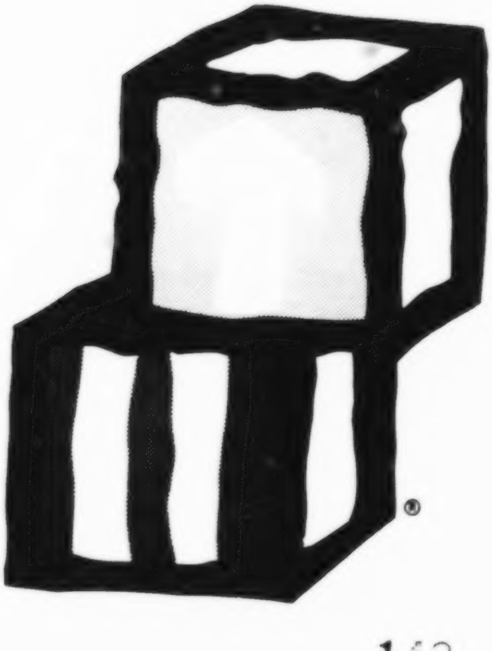
Hersey, Paul. *The Situational Leader*. Warner Books, Inc., 666 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10103. 1985. $13.50. Consult local book stores for availability.

This is Dr. Hersey's latest book on situational leadership incorporating the most recent changes in his model for supervision. The book explains the model and how to apply it in various situations. Although written with a business perspective, it is equally applicable to Head Start.

Keirsey, David, and Bates, Marilyn. *Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types*. Prometheus Nemesis, P.O. Box 2082, Del Mar, CA 92014. 1978. $8.95.

This book is based on the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. The premise is that people are different from each other, that their differences are difficult if not impossible to change, and that these differences are not flaws or weaknesses but rather strengths. The book presents a quick procedure for determining personality types, information regarding people's behavior and attitudes, and suggestions on how to work cooperatively with people of different personality types.

VII. Staff and Parent Training



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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR FOR PARENT AND STAFF TRAINING

- Assessing the needs of staff for training and technical assistance.
- Identifying training needs that grow out of program evaluations and ongoing observations.
- Assuming responsibility for preparing the education section of the training plan based on assessed individual and program training needs.
- Providing and/or ensuring that training for staff and parents is offered as specified in the Performance Standards.
- Implementing the education section of the training plan.
- Offering ongoing training and technical assistance to staff.
- Promoting staff involvement in CDA and participation in professional organizations.
- Taking advantage of opportunities to promote their own professional development.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Review the program's training plan.
- Review the program's training needs assessments.
- Find out who is a CDA among the staff and who is a candidate.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: STAFF AND PARENT TRAINING

	Yes	Needs My Attention
HEAD START'S COMMITMENT TO TRAINING		
1. Do I share responsibility for training with trainees?	______	______
2. Do I encourage staff to seek the CDA credential?	______	______
3. Do I advance my own professional growth?	______	______
4. Do I use the CDA competencies as a framework for in-service training?	______	______
TRAINING PLAN		
5. Do I know the training requirements mandated by the Performance Standards?	______	______
6. Do I understand the steps involved in developing a training plan for staff, parents, and volunteers?	______	______
7. Do I work collaboratively with other coordinators to develop a training plan?	______	______
8. Am I able to identify and select appropriate training resources?	______	______
IMPLEMENTING STAFF TRAINING		
9. Do I prepare both the trainer and trainees for training opportunities?	______	______
10. Do I incorporate a variety of techniques into my training activities?	______	______
11. Do I carefully plan logistics before each training event?	______	______
12. Do I have a systematic plan for evaluating the training program?	______	______
13. Do I incorporate training activities into regular activities such as supervision and staff meetings?	______	______

	Yes	Needs My Attention
IMPLEMENTING TRAINING FOR PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS		
14. Do I provide training opportunities for parents that enhance their knowledge and understanding of educational and developmental needs of their children?	______	______
15. Do I provide orientation and in-service training for classroom volunteers?	______	______

Review your responses, especially those you marked "Needs My Attention," and circle those topics you want to work on. List them below in order of their importance to you.

____

____

____

HEAD START'S COMMITMENT TO TRAINING

Head Start's commitment to provide a quality program for children and families is reflected in the emphasis placed on promoting the growth and development of staff, parents, and children. This commitment to quality care and to professional development is demonstrated by the emphasis placed on training and technical assistance throughout the history of the program.

TRAINING IN THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

Training for staff and parents in the Education Component is planned, coordinated, and sometimes provided by the Education Coordinator. Four types of training are offered each program year:

- orientation;
- pre-service training;
- in-service training and technical assistance; and
- parent training.

Orientation for new staff, volunteers, and parents occurs at the beginning of the program year and any time a new employee is hired, a new child is enrolled in the program, or a new volunteer comes to work. Orientation is designed to promote understanding of, and enthusiasm for, the Head Start program. At the beginning of a program year, orientation is conducted for a group, preferably staff and parents together, to promote the concept of learning together. Group orientation may be led by the Head Start Director and often involves other component coordinators, members of the Policy Council/Committee, and former Head Start parents. The orientation period may last several weeks, during which the Education Coordinator provides extra support to new staff members.

During the program year, orientation of new education staff is generally provided by the Education Coordinator. New parents usually receive orientation at enrollment from the Social Services or Parent Involvement Coordinator.

Pre-service training is offered at the beginning of a program year for all Head Start staff as a group; the staff of each component often meets separately afterward to discuss topics relevant to its component. Generally the Director and all component coordinators take responsibility for pre-service training, the primary goals of which are to welcome the staff back to work, share any policy changes and/or new directions for Head Start, and update everyone on new program information. Pre-service training should be upbeat and designed to motivate staff to prepare for a successful new year.

In-service training and technical assistance are offered throughout the year on both a scheduled and an as-needed basis. Training is based on an assessment of individual needs, program needs, and the training requirements in the Performance Standards. It can include general training sessions for all staff, such as a workshop on health procedures or child-abuse reporting requirements; training for a specific group, such as a session for head teachers on supervising teaching assistants and volunteers; training for all education staff and parents on a topic of common concern, such as how to handle children's fears; or a session at a given center for the staff on how to work together more effectively. In-service training also includes courses offered at local colleges, conferences, seminars and professional meetings, newsletters, the establishment of a resource center, and staff meetings.

Education Coordinators provide technical assistance during a center or home visit when they note problems as well as strengths, respond to requests for assistance, and provide feedback and support to the staff. It might include sharing a relevant article or training package on how to handle transitions, helping the staff assess and rearrange the classroom environment to alleviate some troublesome behavior, leading a problem-solving session on how to handle an epidemic of inappropriate language, or analyzing a case study on a child whose behavior concerns the staff.

Parent training also is offered each program year. Although the Parent Involvement Coordinator has the primary responsibility for planning and coordinating parent training, the Education Coordinator must also be involved. The Performance Standards require that specific training be offered to parents on activities they can use at home to promote learning and development of their child, and on how to deal with special developmental needs. The Education Coordinator and education staff are often asked to provide this training and to participate in other meetings and training sessions for parents.

Parents who volunteer in the classroom also receive training on the curriculum, the daily program, and how to support children's growth. Because teachers have the most contact with the parent volunteers, they can provide much of the training by modeling appropriate strategies and techniques and by discussing them during free periods. Teachers can also note areas where volunteers need training. Education Coordinators can assist in this by providing group workshops, locating handouts, and providing feedback to volunteers when they visit the classrooms.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR FOR TRAINING

Education Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that training takes place in the Education Component. However, it is important to note that they share this responsibility both with other component coordinators and with those who receive training.

As in all aspects of Head Start, coordination with other components is essential. Training often takes place across component areas or is offered for all staff and parents. Therefore, Head Start requires each program to develop one comprehensive training plan that reflects input from all components, who then share responsibility for implementing and evaluating the training plan.

Responsibility for training also is shared with the trainees. A training program is effective only if those for whom it was designed gain new skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes that they apply in their work with children and families. Effectiveness is based on how well the trainer prepares and presents the training and whether the trainee is willing to learn. Every employee's job description needs to clearly state that participation in training and a commitment to professional development are required.

Education Coordinators can enhance the effectiveness of training in the following ways:

- matching training opportunities with specific and expressed needs of each staff member;
- making sure that the best trainers and consultants are hired;
- preparing consultants who will work with individuals or a group so that they know who they will be training, what experiences they bring, and how they respond best;
- preparing trainees by notifying them in advance of training sessions, identifying clear objectives for the session, and suggesting ways to prepare for the training;
- participating in the training itself; and
- following up by asking trainees to evaluate the session and helping them to apply what they have learned on the job.

The level of involvement of Education Coordinators in planning and implementing training for staff and parents varies depending on how comfortable the Education Coordinator is about conducting training, the size of the program, how the Director assigns responsibilities for training and coordination of component areas, and other program variables. Whether or not an Education Coordinator has been given explicit responsibility for planning and implementing training, *every* Education Coordinator engages in training and technical assistance activities; it is inherent in the role.

As supervisors, Education Coordinators set standards, observe the staff, and provide feedback on what they do well and where improvement is needed. Constructive feedback is an important part of training. Most supervisory tasks are opportunities to identify training needs and/or directly offer guidance and training. In evaluating the Education Component, Education Coordinators determine the program's needs, where training or technical assistance can help, what training opportunities can be provided, and how to locate the best training resources. The process of preparing and updating the Education Component Plan often reveals new strategies or goals that will require training to be accomplished. Education Coordinators also stay on top of current trends and innovations in the field of early childhood education so that they can share new ideas and resources with the staff and continually work to enhance the quality of the program. Every visit to a center or home-based session offers an opportunity to provide training and support to the staff and often to parents as well.

The Education Coordinator also plays an active role in the Child Development Associate (CDA) process by encouraging staff participation, arranging for CDA training, and often serving as a trainer. The CDA competencies are compatible with the Performance Standards and therefore provide a useful guide for planning and assessing training. Many programs use the CDA competencies to prepare job descriptions, assess training needs, and identify staff performance standards. Thus, all Education Coordinators should be knowledgeable about and committed to the CDA program.

Head Start's commitment to training is a commitment for Education Coordinators as well. Education Coordinators demonstrate an interest in advancing their own professional growth by joining professional organizations, attending conferences, taking courses, staying on top of issues, and seeking ways to improve their job skills.

As Head Start programs assume greater responsibility for their own training and technical assistance, it becomes increasingly important for local programs to have a system in place for planning and implementing training. This system, symbolized by the program training plan, has several important advantages.

- It provides a logical, sequenced approach based on documented need.
- It supports a team approach to training: all staff, volunteers, and parents have input through the needs assessment process.
- It provides procedures for measuring and evaluating the effect of training and for determining future program and staff needs.

Education Coordinators participate actively in the process of planning and implementing this comprehensive training plan.

DEVELOPING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT TRAINING PLAN[1]

Each year, with staff and parent input, the Education Coordinator develops the Education Component section of the training plan. Some programs develop training plans that cover more than one year, as they don't believe they can cover all the requirements in one year. The plan matches the assessed needs of the program and individuals with the most appropriate training and technical assistance resources available. Training is based on needs assessments, the Performance Standards' requirements, and self-assessment results. Coordination with other components prevents duplication of efforts and ensures that all training needs are addressed. The steps used by most programs to develop the training plan include:

- **Step one**—review program training requirements;
- **Step two**—assess program training needs;
- **Step three**—assess individual training needs;
- **Step four**—analyze needs assessment results;
- **Step five**—select training resources;
- **Step six**—write the training plan;
- **Step seven**—develop the training budget; and
- **Step eight**—complete final review of the training plan.

This section discusses how to complete each step in this suggested planning process. This process is used primarily to plan training for Education Component staff and volunteers. The Education Coordinator also will plan training for parents; however, this planning is done in collaboration with the Parent Involvement Coordinator.

STEP ONE: REVIEW PROGRAM TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The Education Coordinator needs to assess program training needs related to the Performance Standards, the educational program, self-assessment results, and coordination with other components. Certain program- or component-wide training topics are addressed every year, while others arise when implementing new initiatives or making program changes or improvements.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND OTHER HEAD START TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

The Performance Standards list staff and parent training requirements in every component. The requirements for staff training include the following.

Performance Standard 1304.2-2 (e). The plan shall provide methods for enhancing the knowledge and understanding of both staff and parents of the educational and developmental needs and activities of children in the program. These shall include:

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[1] Adapted from Donna McDaniel, *A Guide for Training* (Kansas City, MO: Community Development Institute, n.d.), pp. 1-5.

- *parent training in activities that can be used in the home to reinforce the learning and development of their children;*
- *parent training in the observation of growth and development of their children in the home environment and identification of and handling special developmental needs;*
- *staff and parent training, under a program jointly developed with all components of the Head Start program, in child development and behavioral developmental problems of preschool children; and*
- *staff training in identification of and handling children with special needs and working with the parents of such children, and in coordinating relevant referral resources.*

The training requirements for other components need to be coordinated with the Education Component whenever the education staff are the primary recipients of training. These requirements include the following.

Mental Health. *Performance Standard 1304.3-8 (a). The mental health part of the plan shall provide that a mental health professional shall be available, at least on a consultation basis, to the Head Start program and to the children. The mental health professional shall: . . . (2) Train Head Start staff.*

Nutrition. *Performance Standard 1304.3-10 (d). The nutrition plan shall set forth an organized nutrition education program for staff, parents and children. This program shall assure that . . . (4) All staff, including administrative, receive education in principles of nutrition and their application to child development and family health, and ways to create a good physical, social and emotional environment which supports and promotes development of sound food habits and their role in helping the child and family to achieve adequate nutrition.*

Program Options. *Performance Standards, Appendix A. Program Option for Project Head Start—N-30-364-1-20*

1. *There must be a specific training plan for staff and volunteers for any option chosen. It should address itself to the requirements and goals of the specific program variations being implemented.*
2. *Variations in Center Attendance*
   Staff utilization should contribute noticeably to program quality by maximizing staff talent, potential and expertise. Staff training goals must be identified and a training plan designed which will facilitate the implementation of the option. Such training should enable the staff to incorporate curriculum modifications necessary to accommodate the shorter week and to allow for the developmental differences between three-year-olds and five-year-olds.
3. *Home-Based Models*
   Staff Development. Programs must submit a staff and volunteer recruitment plan and a training plan, including content of proposed pre- and in-service training programs, teaching method, descriptions of training staff or consultants, and provisions for continued in-service training. The career development plan must be designed to develop or increase staff members' knowledge about:
   - *Approaches to and techniques of working with parents;*
   - *Other home-based or Home Start-like programs; and*
   - *All Head Start component areas.*

Handicapped. *Training and Technical Assistance OCD Notice N-30-333-1 (10). Training and technical assistance in support of the handicapped effort will be closely integrated with overall OCD program operations. Each Head Start program has the responsibility, in coordination with the ACYF Regional Office, to identify or arrange the necessary support to carry out a program consistent with the policies set forth in this issuance supplementing those activities through workshops, on-site training and development of materials.*

Other Head Start training requirements related to the Education Component are:

Child Abuse And Neglect. *OCD Notice 1/18/77, N-30-356-1 Training. Head Start agencies and delegate agencies shall provide orientation and training for staff on the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect. They should provide protection for abused and neglected children. Such orientation ought to foster a helpful rather than a punitive attitude toward abusing or neglecting parents and other caretakers.*

STEP TWO: ASSESS PROGRAM TRAINING NEEDS

In addition to individual staff training needs and those required by Head Start, each program will have specific needs related to the Education Component Plan. As discussed in Chapter III, the Education Component Plan is a blueprint for implementing the component's activities, and includes any changes to the educational program based on community needs, self-assessment results, or other recommendations. Analysis of the Education Component Plan may identify a variety of training needs. For example, training may be needed to:

- bring the program into compliance (a series of workshops on individualized planning);
- follow up on a staff evaluation (the Education Coordinator visits a classroom to model an effective strategy);
- introduce a new set of activities (an orientation to a new nutrition education program);
- implement a new curriculum (pre-service and ongoing training on the curriculum);
- stimulate professional growth (attendance at a conference for staff who have taught for many years);
- implement a new program option (a week-long session for newly hired home visitors);
- open a new classroom (orientation for new staff, site visits to nearby centers, peer training, and on-site technical assistance);
- amend the personnel policies to encourage all members of the education staff to seek their CDA (contracting with the community college for CDA training); or
- address an area identified by the Education Coordinator as in need of improvement (training led by a consultant on how to use positive discipline methods in the classroom).

Training could be required as the result of a new national thrust for Head Start, developments in the early childhood education field, or other societal trends affecting children and families (e.g., new requirements related to child abuse and neglect).

STEP THREE: ASSESS INDIVIDUAL TRAINING NEEDS

It is important to give each staff member the opportunity to complete an individual training needs assessment. Training is most effective when the recipients have determined for themselves that they need to learn more about a given topic or to develop a specific skill. The results of these assessments are used to develop the training plan. The following describes a training assessment system used by many Head Start Programs. A sample form is included in the *Resource Papers* (VII-1-4).

Each staff member completes an individual needs assessment form, listing educational history, CDA status, and previous training experiences. This personal information allows the Education Coordinator to determine what training would be appropriate for this staff member. The rest of the needs assessment is structured according to either the staff member's job description or the CDA competencies. Next to each area of responsibility or competency, the staff member indicates specific training needs he/she believes will improve job performance.

In the next column, the staff member indicates suggested resources for meeting each identified training need. Resources could include a book or film, or a workshop presented by a community college or professional association, a training consultant, or a Head Start colleague who has already developed the needed expertise or skill. Not all staff will be able to suggest resources, but many will make useful suggestions. The notations in this column provide the Education Coordinator with general information about available resources, and specific information about this individual's preferred style of learning.

The Education Coordinator meets with each individual to discuss the needs listed and the resources proposed. The Education Coordinator may add other training needs based on ongoing assessments of the staff member's performance, such as classroom observations, staff meetings, a review of lesson plans, or feedback from parents. These additional training needs should be discussed with the staff person and agreed on before being included in the training plan.

The Education Coordinator also completes an assessment of his/her own training needs and discusses them with the Director. The needs assesment format used can be the same as for staff; however, it will be based on the Education Coordinator's job description rather than the CDA competencies.

STEP FOUR: ANALYZE NEEDS ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The next step in developing the training plan is to analyze the results of the needs assessments, prioritize the needs to be addressed, and determine what training methods and resources will be used. The list of training needs will include those for the whole component as well as those for individuals.

Begin by addressing component training topics that are required by Head Start. Because they must be included in every training plan, they are a first priority. Determine how and when these training requirements will be met, and include this information in the plan.

Next, group the training needs by related topics or skills. Determine how many staff have requested training in each area and note which individuals have needs that coincide with program training needs.

In the latter instances, and when a large number of individuals identify a specific topic or skill area, a group training format is appropriate. However, there are many other training techniques or formats that can be used to address a training need. These may have been identified on the individual needs assessment forms, in which case they are also the preferred learning style of that individual. Possible ways to meet a training need include:

- group discussions led by a staff member;
- consultant-led group training;
- workshops offered by other agencies;
- self-instructional materials;
- staff meetings;
- books and journal articles;
- technical assistance from peers or the Education Coordinator;
- audiovisual materials;
- group training using a published training module;
- conferences;
- college courses;
- brainstorming how to solve a problem; and
- staff visits to other programs or organizations (e.g., a trip to an educational resource center).

It is also important to prioritize the needs identified. Head Start training funds are limited, as is the time available to provide pre-service or in-service training for education staff. As stated earlier, required training should be addressed first. Other priorities will be based on program needs, the number of staff identifying a topic, how the training will enhance the services provided, and other locally determined criteria. Training also may be offered because it builds on skills learned at earlier training sessions.

STEP FIVE: SELECT TRAINING RESOURCES

In addition to the resources identified on the assessment forms, Education Coordinators need to identify other organizations or materials to meet training needs. Head Start programs may find it useful to maintain a resource directory listing training resources within the program, in the community, in other Head Start or early childhood programs, and recommended consultants. The directory can also include program resources, such as training modules, books, professional journals, and audiovisual aids.

CONSULTANTS

When using a consultant to provide training for the Education Component, look for someone who:

- is knowledgeable about Head Start;
- has the necessary expertise and background in the selected topic;
- can be responsive to the Head Start training audience;
- is recommended by another program or colleague; and
- has a training style that is appropriate to the needs of the training audience.

RESOURCES FOR CDA TRAINING

Education Coordinators should encourage teaching staff to seek training and appropriate early childhood credentials, such as the CDA, by holding an orientation session on CDA, and/or seeking a CDA credential themselves. Once a group of teachers indicates an interest in CDA, the Education Coordinator can act as the advisor/trainer for the CDA candidates. In some programs, the Education Coordinator identifies CDA-eligible trainees and a local college assumes full responsibility for planning, staffing, and administering the CDA academic and field work. Another option is for the Education Coordinator to select the trainees and then administer the program by hiring an independent consultant to do field supervision and enroll its candidates in pre-existing courses at local colleges. Currently there are several hundred colleges providing CDA training. (Check with the regional office for local colleges or universities.)

Selecting resources also includes considering the costs involved. In all cases the Education Coordinator and the Director should try to match a quality and cost-effective resource with the identified training need. Budgeting for training is discussed in a later section.

STEP SIX: WRITE THE TRAINING PLAN

After identifying the training topics to be covered during the year and possible formats and resources, the training plan is developed. The training plan includes three main categories of training for staff and parents: orientation, pre-service, and in-service.

TRAINING CATEGORIES

Orientation is provided in group or individual sessions to present information about Head Start, the Education Component, and specific job responsibilities. Orientation will include:

- an overview of Head Start—its history, the Performance Standards, roles and responsibilities of parents, and the five components;
- an overview of the Education Component—the curriculum, policies and procedures, the education philosophy, and goals and objectives;
- personnel policies and procedures;
- opportunities to get to know other staff;
- a general tour of the facility and an in-depth orientation to the specific learning environment; and
- written materials for review and reference.

The *Resource Papers* (VII-5-7) include an orientation checklist used by one Head Start program, and suggested "Orientation Techniques for New Staff" (VII-8). Chapter I of this guide may also be a useful resource for providing an orientation to Head Start.

Pre-service training occurs each year before the program opens. Usually pre-service sessions cover topics such as program administration, new legislation or other requirements, and the goals and objectives for the year. The training provided will relate both to the whole program and to individual components. Pre-service sessions might also include activities that set the tone for the year; e.g., team building, presentation of a theme for the year, or a guest speaker. Pre-service training sessions may include both staff and parents.

Although some assessed training needs might be addressed during the pre-service training, it is more likely that this time will be used to provide information to the participants and to review program policies and procedures. The Education Coordinator may be asked to address staff members from all components, providing an overview of the education program and philosophy and the plans for the year.

The pre-service sessions specifically for education staff and volunteers ensure that expectations are clear and that a cooperative and open tone is established. It also is a time to begin assessing strengths and needs as a guide for planning future supervision and training.

The topics to cover in more depth include:

- an overview of the Education Component Plan, clarifying time lines and responsibilities;
- an explanation of the curriculum;
- a detailed discussion of the developmental needs of the children with whom staff will be working;
- a review of policies and procedures, including planning activities, collaborating with parents, completing forms, etc.;
- an explanation of supervision methods and expectations; and
- a summary of the staff development program, including the CDA program, expectations for self-assessment, participation in planning, and attendance at staff meetings and training sessions.

In-service training is most closely related to the needs identified by staff. Most of the scheduled training will take place once the program is underway, when staff are able to take advantage of group and individual training activities.

The schedule for training takes into account when the skills developed in the training will be put to use; e.g., training on screening children should come early in the year. The schedule also depends on when a consultant is available, when a college course is offered, or when a conference will take place.

PLAN FORMAT

A suggested format for the training plan appears in the *Resource Papers* (VII-9). This format includes the following categories:

- training activities planned;
- needs to be met through the training activity;
- training format or technique;
- participants;

- date and time of the event;
- location;
- resource or provider used;
- responsible staff person; and
- estimated costs.

If the Education Component has a large staff, it is advisable to prepare two plans—one for group training sessions and one for individual training. The plan should also identify staff training related to CDA academic and field work and the associated costs of this training. In addition, the plan can be organized in chronological order, beginning with the plans for orientation and pre-service training.

STEP SEVEN: DEVELOP THE TRAINING BUDGET

As the training plan is developed, costs for each training resource are also estimated and an explicit judgment is made that the investment in training will improve the services provided to children and their families. Some costs are specific, such as a college course or journal subscription; others are less clear, such as the cost of implementing a cluster workshop with another program.

Costs related to training may include:

- consultant fees;
- travel and per diem, if applicable;
- cost of photocopying training materials or purchasing pamphlets, books, etc.;
- cost of renting space in which to hold a conference or training session; and
- cost of providing a meal or snack as part of a training session.

This budget can be kept down by using in-house staff for training, by clustering workshops, and by encouraging area professionals to donate their training time. It usually works well to ask different people each time. Although few professionals outside of the program will continually offer their services at no charge, most are willing to do so occasionally. Their services should never be taken for granted. Nurturing consultants and offering them recognition is critical.

Community agencies may also have staff available who can provide training at no cost; e.g., the children's librarian, fire marshals, extension program nutritionists, etc.

The training plan is not complete until all costs have been considered and appropriate estimates prepared. At this point, changes to the plan may be made if a training event is too costly vis-a-vis the staff and program needs that will be met. It is difficult to provide the quality and level of training needed within budget.

STEP EIGHT: COMPLETE FINAL REVIEW OF THE TRAINING PLAN

Once the training plan is completed, a final review will ensure that training needs have been addressed appropriately. Consider questions such as the following.

- Is the number of training sessions workable and comfortable for the trainees?
- Have the developmental levels of the trainees been considered?
- Have participants been informed of the training events in which they will be involved?

A complete checklist for reviewing the plan appears in the *Resource Papers* (VII-10).

IMPLEMENTING STAFF TRAINING

Implementation of training for education staff involves coordination of training activities as defined in the program training plan; sometimes conducting training sessions for staff and parents; providing resources through such vehicles as a resource center or newsletter; and using ongoing opportunities for training, such as staff meetings and problem-solving sessions. Other chapters in this guide, specifically Chapter IV and Chapter VI, also discuss how

Education Coordinators are involved in providing daily training and technical assistance.

COORDINATING TRAINING ACTIVITIES

If training or technical assistance is being provided by a consultant, coordination before, during, and after the training event will enhance its success. This may involve identifying specific objectives for the training session, finding the consultant and negotiating a contract, preparing both the trainer and the trainees, handling logistics, participating in the training itself, conducting follow-up events, and tracking all training events. A good deal of thought and attention to details is required to ensure that training is effective and on target.

HIRING CONSULTANTS

If an Education Coordinator does not know, or has not used, the services of a particular consultant before, it is wise to talk with other programs where the consultant has worked. Credentials alone do not ensure that an individual can train well and be responsive to the needs of the local program.

The Education Coordinator will want to identify and contact training consultants several months before a training session is scheduled. There are several issues to be clarified as early as possible:

- agreement on the date, time, and location for training;
- agreement on the fee and any expenses (travel and per diem);
- a clear understanding of the objectives for the training and the needs that should be addressed;
- what can be realistically covered in the allotted time; and
- special requirements and materials (such as a room that can accommodate several small groups, audiovisual equipment, etc.).

A consultant agreement should be sent as a follow-up to this discussion to formalize the terms of the contract. The *Resource Papers* contain a sample consultant agreement that can be adapted (VII-11).

PREPARING THE CONSULTANT

Consultants should be given an opportunity to learn about the program itself, the needs to be addressed, and the participants who will attend the session. In this way, they can focus their skills and expertise on meeting specific program needs and can select training approaches that are likely to be well received and successful.

Information that should be communicated to trainers can include:

- a list of identified needs;
- request for specific guidance in addressing these needs;
- the program's philosophy;
- the curriculum being implemented;
- information on the local Head Start program (e.g., area served, population, curriculum);
- the audience to be addressed (parents, teachers, home visitors) and their strengths and weaknesses in the subject matter;
- special concerns identified by the Education Coordinator or staff;
- what training participants have had on the topic (to avoid duplication);
- an overview of Head Start, its policies, and guidelines (if the trainer is not familiar with the program); and
- samples of evaluation forms that will be used after the session.

Take the time to answer any questions the trainer has and to discuss plans for the training; such time is well spent. The more clarity there is about what is expected and needed, the more likely that the training will be appropriate and helpful.

PREPARING TRAINEES

Some attention should also be given to preparing the participants who will attend the session. Here again, clear communication is important to ensure that participants show up for training on time and well-prepared. Information that would be helpful to trainees may include:

- verification of enrollment in training (who will attend);
- notification of dates, time, and location (with directions, if needed);
- identification of goals and objectives for the training session;
- how the training relates to CDA, the Performance Standards, or special program needs;
- the trainer's qualifications; and

- material to collect, read, think about, or prepare prior to attending training.

The last suggestion can greatly enhance participation in a training session. For example, if the session is on room arrangement, participants might be asked to draw a floor plan of their room and bring it to the session to be analyzed as part of the training. If the training will be on supportive guidance, the staff might be asked to bring specific examples of children whose behavior is particularly challenging.

PLANNING LOGISTICS

Materials needed and the environment itself should be considered in advance. If the training will take place in a location unfamiliar to the Education Coordinator, a visit to the site is important to determine the number of people the room can accommodate and to check lighting conditions, accessibility of rest rooms, etc. Reserve the space, if necessary.

Materials and equipment like those listed below should be ordered or reserved in advance:

- audiovisual equipment;
- films or training packages that have to be obtained;
- flip charts, markers, tape, chalk, etc.;
- handouts that have to be duplicated and collated; and
- evaluation sheets.

Other logistics might include ensuring that staff and parents have transportation to and from the training site, and that there are contingency plans for bad weather.

THE TRAINING EVENT

The day of the training, the Education Coordinator will want to go to the training site early to prepare the environment and meet with the trainer. Attention to the following is important:

- arranging the furniture the way the trainer wants it (small groups at tables, a circle of chairs, etc.);
- checking the temperature in the room (over-heated rooms make people sleepy);
- ensuring that all equipment is in working order and that replacement bulbs, extension cords, adapters, etc., are available, if necessary; and
- displaying name tags, sign-in sheets, agendas, and other forms where they will be accessible as participants arrive.

A brief meeting with the trainer before the session will enable the Education Coordinator to:

- welcome the trainer and see if there are any last minute needs;
- clarify his/her role during the training (e.g., as participant or observer);
- make sure the room is arranged according to the trainer's wishes;
- ensure that all needed materials are accounted for;
- review objectives for the training;
- go over the agenda; and
- decide on smoking regulations and other rules that will need to be explicitly stated.

The Education Coordinator's presence at the training session sends an important message to staff and parents who are participating. It validates the importance of the training, lets participants know that their attendance and involvement is being noted, and ensures that everyone receives the same information. If the trainer needs support because a particular approach isn't eliciting a response or the suggestions are inappropriate for Head Start, the Education Coordinator, knowing the participants and understanding Head Start requirements, can pose a question or provide guidance that will enhance the training. When consultants reinforce what the Education Coordinator has been saying to staff, the workshop provides a forum for further defining and validating beliefs and approaches that underlie the Education Component's services.

At the end of the session, evaluation instruments should be distributed, completed, and collected. Any other forms, such as attendance sheets and expense forms, should be collected as well.

Attendance sheets are important for tracking implementation of the training plan. Evaluation forms, including those completed by participants as well as by the trainer, provide important information on how well the training was received, what worked, and what didn't. This information can be used in planning future training activities. Sample evaluation forms appear in the *Resource Papers* (VII-12-15).

FOLLOW-UP

Follow-up is important for two reasons: to determine whether the information and skills gained during a training session are actually used on the job, and to reinforce and support learning.

The effect of the training can be evaluated by sending a questionnaire to the participants or by observing staff members on the job to determine whether they are applying what they have learned. Feedback on these observations can be helpful to the staff member and afford another opportunity to reinforce concepts and skills.

Education Coordinators can support the application of new skills and knowledge by:

- providing other resources on the topic such as articles, books, and training packages;
- spending time in the classroom or on a home visit to support the staff members' efforts to implement a new strategy;
- planning a follow-up session with participants to discuss progress and experiences in applying what was learned;
- having participants share handouts and what they have learned with other staff members (teaching others reinforces learning and spreads the benefits of the training); and
- identifying other training opportunities on the topic.

CONDUCTING TRAINING

Many Education Coordinators conduct training sessions for education staff and sometimes for staff from other programs. The latter is an excellent way for programs to pool resources and share expertise.

Although it is often refreshing to bring in an outside consultant with a new viewpoint and approach, there are advantages to having training conducted by the Education Coordinator. No one knows the Education Component and the staff better than the Education Coordinator. Therefore, the training offered is likely to be appropriate, specifically designed to meet identified needs, and to build on individual strengths of the staff involved.

Many of the steps involved in planning for a consultant also apply to training conducted by the Education Coordinator. Specifically, Education Coordinators will want to clarify what needs are to be addressed, the objectives of the training session, who will attend the session, how participants should prepare for training, and the logistics of the session itself. The Education Coordinator also will want to consider how adults in Head Start learn best, how to present the content, and what training strategies to use.

ADULT LEARNERS

Most Education Coordinators have participated in and led numerous Head Start training sessions. They have identified characteristics that seem to be common to many adult learners. In planning training sessions, many trainers have found it useful to remember that participants often learn best when they:

- plan for and evaluate their own learning;
- apply new information to their own experiences and knowledge;
- have an opportunity to share concerns and experiences and to learn new ways to extend their skills and cope;
- take responsibility for their own learning by identifying what they want to learn and how they learn best;
- choose from a variety of activities during a training session designed to involve them and facilitate their participation;
- are challenged and trusted to solve problems and develop their own ideas; and
- are offered a wealth of information and strategies by the trainer and other participants.

These insights into how learning can be enhanced challenge the trainer to design workshops that are well organized and that foster interaction. Trainers may consider using these techniques.

- **Share the specific workshop goals and objectives with the participants.** Effective training involves developing a shared group commitment to the goals and objectives.
- **Draw on the participants' experiences.** Training is made meaningful by drawing on the personal experiences and observations of the participants and by relating concepts to personal situations and experiences.
- **Establish from the beginning that participants are responsible for their own learning.** It is important to state that everyone will take something different from the session depending on what is important to them, how much they put into the session, and whether they integrate and use what they learn.
- **Emphasize the development of skills rather than the rote learning of responses.** Learning is the process of assimilating and accommodating new information and using it to improve skills.
- **Encourage trainees' active involvement** in role plays, small group analyses, discussions, and case studies.

Training is more relevant if concepts, principles, and strategies are applied to real situations.

- **Allow trainees to make interpretations and draw conclusions.** Trainers should provide the information, data, and examples needed to permit the group to identify patterns or trends, to make generalizations, and to draw conclusions.
- **Plan a balance of different activities and use a variety of instructional media.** A balance of approaches contributes to the group's interest and ultimately ensures greater retention and application of skills and content. Training approaches can include:
  - role play,
  - problem solving,
  - brainstorming,
  - case studies,
  - questions and answers,
  - small group discussions and tasks, and
  - short lectures.

Good communication is an important aspect of effective training. For example, a trainer who states, "What I hear you saying is that Shawn's continual tantrums are disrupting the entire group and requiring a good deal of your time," may be rephrasing what a participant has shared to clarify the concern before going on to discuss the problem and some solutions. Some techniques for effective delivery of training can be found in the *Resource Papers* (VII-16).

Trainers each develop their own style of presentation and know which methods work well and which are less successful. A trainer who is uncomfortable with role plays will convey this uneasiness to participants and perhaps should use a different approach to present the same content. Good trainers recognize their strengths, preferences, and unique style.

PROVIDING RESOURCES

Resources may include written and audiovisual materials that define and extend the curriculum and the program's philosphy and expand on teaching strategies and other topics of interest to Head Start staff, such as communication, teamwork, or parent involvement. In Head Start, where the staff develops and/or adapts a curriculum that is appropriate for the children and families served, resource materials are valuable and provide ideas and guidance.

A resource center and a program newsletter are two vehicles for providing resources.

RESOURCE CENTERS

A resource center can hold books, journals, and multimedia materials relevant to the program. Staff should be asked to provide information on what should go in the resource center and what items are most useful. A resource center may be a simple shelf in the Education Coordinator's office or an entire room, replete with bookcases, projectors, videotape players, and other equipment. In either case, it is a specific and central place known to all, where certain materials are located.

A resource center can serve three major purposes.

- It can provide immediate assistance to staff who are looking for solutions to problems.
- It can provide materials and ideas to help parents or staff work with children.
- In some settings it can provide an environment that encourages sharing and exchange of ideas and techniques.

Resource centers include items such as curriculum materials, books, materials made by the staff or parents, tapes, or films. Thoughtful selection of resources is crucial if the center is to serve as a support for staff and parents. Consideration should be given to selecting resources that are most likely to be used. It is also important for staff and parents to understand how to use the materials.

To stimulate interest in the resource center, Education Coordinators might try one of the following ideas.[2]

- When centers are a considerable distance from the main office, keep a mini-library in the car to share with staff during on-site visits.
- Feature a book-of-the-month at staff meetings, with one person or team making a report, doing a skit, or reciting a passage to highlight the book.
- Include time in each training session when staff can browse and make resource selections. Ask staff members to report briefly on their selections at a later meeting.
- Select three or four books or articles related to a training topic and feature these at the training session.

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[2] Adapted from Rayko Hashimoto, *The Oregon Head Start Education Coordinator's Handbook* (Portland, OR: Oregon Head Start State Technical Assistance and Training Office, 1983), p. 122.

- Recommend a book, article, or other resource to a staff member for a specific purpose—that is, when the resource will address an identified need or ease a specific problem.
- Involve the staff in selecting future resource purchases.
- Ask the staff to identify articles that they have found especially useful.

NEWSLETTERS

A newsletter contains news or information circulated at regular intervals to program staff and/or parents. The newsletter does not need to be a formal document with a logo, headlines, or extensive artwork. In fact, everyone will be more likely to read a newsletter if the paragraphs are brief and articles are separated by plenty of white space.

The newsletter can serve several functions. Although its primary purpose is to share information, it can also serve as an effective training strategy if it is used to:

- recognize accomplishments of teachers, parents, and volunteers related to training activities;
- list new resources available in the program or in the community that augment training activities;
- inform staff of opportunities for professional development;
- include teaching tips, games, or activities;
- discuss applications of specific activities in both home and center settings; and
- serve as a resource exchange by listing teachers who can assist others or who have materials or books to share on a specific training topic.

ONGOING TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

As noted throughout this *Guide*, Education Coordinators incorporate training and technical assistance into most of the activities involved in leading the Education Component. On-site visits are especially useful for assessing needs, providing feedback, and offering assistance and resources. Examples of how Education Coordinators can take advantage of these opportunities are given in each chapter as they apply to all aspects of the role being described.

Perhaps one of the most supportive and effective training strategies is the Education Coordinator's readiness to sit with the staff at a staff meeting or an impromptu session at a center to help a group articulate a problem and develop possible solutions. Serving as a sounding board, the Education Coordinator can ask questions to help the staff identify what is happening, why it is troubling, how they have attempted to deal with the situation, what the results have been, and what other strategies might be tried. The results of this process help clarify the real issues, provide creative strategies to deal with the problems, and, perhaps most important, let the staff know that they can depend on the Education Coordinator's support.

As an example, suppose a group of teachers is frustrated by the epidemic of inappropriate words used by their four-year-olds. The Education Coordinator might pose the following questions to help them think through the problem and arrive at possible solutions.

- When does it seem to happen most?
- Is the leader in using these words a particular child or several children?
- What results do the children achieve?
- How can knowledge of child development help us better understand the causes for their behavior?
- What do you think these children are feeling? What might be causing the behavior? What message might be behind it?
- What have you tried so far? What were the results?
- Suppose you ignored the behavior?
- How have you tried to address the child's real needs and convey that there are other ways to ask for what they want without using words that no one likes?

In addition to guiding the problem-solving session, Education Coordinators can share their own experiences and explain what worked and didn't work for them. On some topics, an Education Coordinator might not have a solution or specific guidance to offer. It is appropriate in these circumstances to promise to do some research and return to discuss the topic within a short time. Perhaps a consultant, another staff member, or a book may be found to help everyone learn together.

The *Resource Papers* (VII-17-18) include an excerpt from a pamphlet that describes a process for the staff to use in solving children's behavioral challenges and arriving at possible teaching strategies.

PROMOTING PROFESSIONALISM AND RECOGNIZING ACHIEVEMENT

Helping staff meet their professional goals is part of the Education Coordinator's role. To accomplish this, Education Coordinators often find themselves acting as a part-time coach, encouraging staff to identify and pursue goals; a part-time advisor, assessing options and offering suggestions and choices; a part-time counselor, allaying fears and offering encouragement; and a part-time advocate, identifying career opportunities and securing funding or other resources. The process for fostering professional development must be individualized and is most effective if carried out on a one-to-one basis that emphasizes the staff member's personal responsibility for defining professional goals.

FOSTERING CAREER ADVANCEMENT

The CDA Credentialing System offers career development opportunities for staff. In fact, the sixth CDA competency goal is based on the commitment to professionalism. Demonstrating the competency entails "seeking out and taking advantage of opportunities to improve his or her competence, both for professional growth and for the benefit of children and families." (CDA Competency Goal VI.)

Teachers, home visitors, and Education Coordinators demonstrate professionalism by:

- evaluating their own performance to identify needs for professional growth;
- taking advantage of opportunities for personal and professional development by attending conferences or joining appropriate professional organization;
- maintaining and working to increase fluency in their nondominant language in order to improve bilingual competence;
- learning all they can about the culture(s) of the families they work with and visit; and
- keeping informed about new developments and issues in the early childhood education field and about adult education and legislation that affects programs for children and their families.

Avenues Education Coordinators can use to foster career advancement include:

- arranging continuing education credits (CEU's) for participation in staff training (both in-house and at workshops away from the program);
- giving the staff release time to attend workshops and conferences;
- encouraging participation in career development programs available via cable television;
- encouraging certification in special programs, such as Exploring Parenting or Red Cross First Aid; and
- providing support to CDA training participants.

DEMONSTRATING COMMITMENT TO PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Education Coordinators should not forget their own needs for career development. By attending conferences and seminars, enrolling in courses, seeking advice from others, and keeping up with developments in the field (as discussed in Chapter II), Education Coordinators demonstrate to the staff that professional growth is an ongoing commitment.

IMPLEMENTING TRAINING FOR PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

All coordinators share the responsibility for providing training for parents, but the Parent Involvement Coordinator generally assumes the lead responsibility for planning and coordinating this training. Training for volunteers may be conducted by any coordinator or a staff member. If the volunteers will be working in the classroom, their training is the responsibility of the education staff or the Education Coordinator.

As in all training activities, the more they involve representatives from each group—staff, parents, and volunteers—the more enriching they become and the more everyone benefits.

TRAINING FOR PARENTS

Specific training requirements for parents are listed under the Education Component in the Performance Standards. Many of the topics are also required for staff training. Specifically, Education Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that training is provided in these areas.

1304.2-2(e)

(2) *activities that can be used in the home to reinforce the learning and development of their children in the center;*

(3) *the observation and development of their children in the home environment and identification and handling of special developmental needs;*

(5) *child development and behavioral developmental problems of preschool children.*

SHOULD PARENTS AND STAFF PARTICIPATE IN TRAINING TOGETHER?

There are many benefits of offering joint training to parents and staff. Each group views child development from its own perspective and can enrich the training sessions by sharing experiences and knowledge. When parents and staff participate in training together, learning in both groups is enhanced.

However, not all topics are appropriate for joint training sessions. For example, if a training session addresses behavior problems exploring specific case examples, it would be best to hold the discussion as a part of a staff meeting.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PARENT TRAINING?

Education Coordinators are not responsible for providing all training for parents. Parents will participate in training sessions offered by other components on topics such as health and nutrition and participating in the self-assessment and the Policy Council/Committee. In these workshops, the Education Coordinator may be asked to participate or to help lead a session.

Because the education staff often develops strong ties with parents, especially in programs where children are brought to the center and picked up by their parents each day, one of the best strategies for offering parent training is to support the staff in working with parents. Teachers and home visitors are in the best position to integrate training into the everyday interactions with parents. For example, one of the best opportunities for training parents is to involve them in planning program activities and to include them as volunteers in the classroom. Many practical ideas for training parents are described in Chapter IV, under "Involving Parents in the Daily Program." Other opportunities are described below.

Center committee meetings provide an excellent opportunity for the education staff to work with other component coordinators to plan parent training sessions. Activities or discussion topics such as the following might be offered.

- The nutritionist may help the staff conduct a session on the importance of reducing sugar in a family's diet.
- The Social Services Coordinator may conduct a session on how to fill out a job application.
- The Education Coordinator and staff can plan a series of role plays to demonstrate typical behavior problems with young children and how they can be handled most effectively.

Workshops for parents can be planned and jointly sponsored by several centers that are in close proximity to each other. Based on informal assessment of parent's interests, workshops can be offered periodically during the program year.

Training for parents on how to use home visits is often neglected but potentially very powerful. Teachers and home visitors receive training on how to conduct a home visit, but most programs fail to prepare parents to make the most of this opportunity. A training session for parents, perhaps conducted jointly with the Parent Involvement Coordinator, could be offered early in the program year, perhaps as part of parent orientation to the program.

Parent education courses require a lengthy time commitment but offer an excellent opportunity for parents and staff to develop both parenting skills and mutual support networks. The Parent Involvement Coordinator would assume major responsibility for arranging and conducting the sessions, sometimes jointly with someone from the education staff. A teacher or a parent who has completed the course is often asked to lead the sessions. Packaged materials may be available from the regional office.

TRAINING FOR VOLUNTEERS

Head Start volunteers are very important to the program because they can provide individual attention to children and administrative support to the program. Volunteers can perform such activities as supervising individual and small group learning activities, overseeing outside play, reading stories, or just talking to the children. Volunteers are also valuable classroom resources who can share expertise or experiences with the children. Finally, volunteers can enhance the effectiveness of the staff. For example, a psychologist can provide advice on supportive discipline and a former librarian can help organize books and resources.

Head Start volunteers have a wide range of backgrounds and include community members, current and former Head Start parents; foster grandparents; retired senior program members; and college, university, or high school students. They bring to the program differences in age, experience, educational level, motivational level, culture, and reasons for working with Head Start. Because of this variety, volunteers are at different levels professionally, educationally, personally, and attitudinally and have different training needs. However, all volunteers should receive an orientation to the program, its philosophy, its goals, and their role in it.

Because volunteers have a unique role within the Education Program, they also deserve some special attention during their orientation period. The following ideas might be useful in planning an orientation for volunteers.[3]

- **Classroom Observation.** Invite potential volunteers to observe a Head Start program for several hours or to come back once or twice to observe various parts of the day in order to decide whether or not they would enjoy being a classroom volunteer.
- **Child Development.** Give a brief orientation on child development using films, filmstrips, and other resources. Volunteers need to understand the developmental needs of the children with whom they will be working.
- **A Typical Day.** Give volunteers training on a typical day in the Head Start program so they understand what to expect, the purpose for each activity, and the daily schedule.
- **Discipline.** Provide training on positive discipline and how and why Head Start staff disciplines young children. Give them materials to browse through as well.
- **Individual Interests.** Ask volunteers to fill out a volunteer interest inventory sheet. Volunteers who are involved in activities they are interested in will be of great value to the program.
- **Commitment.** Ask volunteers to fill out and sign a statement of commitment. This procedure enhances the chances that volunteers will be dependable. It is like signing a contract and reaffirms to volunteers what their roles and responsibilities are and that they are valued by Head Start.

Once volunteers have started working in the program, they should be included in other in-service training events if the content is relevant to their role. The more they are made to feel a part of the program, the more they will give.

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[3] Adapted from Carol Rudolph, Helen Vojna, and Sylvia Carter, *Training Manual for Local Head Start Staff: Part III: Child Development* (College Park, MD: Head Start Resource and Training Center, University of Maryland University College, 1983), Section 4, p. 8.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL TRAINING

- Involve staff and parents in determining both individual and program training needs.
- Take the time to prepare materials and arrange logistics in advance so the training proceeds smoothly.
- Ensure that staff attendance at training events meets identified training needs.
- Hire consultants who have been recommended to the program.
- Meet with consultants in advance to provide them with information about the program and the skill levels and needs of staff and parents.
- Plan to follow up on training sessions.
- Keep abreast of training opportunities within the Head Start network, as well as those offered by other early childhood education professional groups.
- Take advantage of individualized training opportunities when observing and providing feedback.
- Include a variety of training approaches in the training plan.

RESOURCES

DEVELOPING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT TRAINING PLAN

McDaniel, Donna. *A Guide For Training*. Community Development Institute, 15 West 10th, Suite 1101, Kansas City, MO 64105.

This manual describes the successful system for planning and implementing training and technical assistance developed by the Community Development Institute. A description of the system is accompanied by forms to use in conducting individual needs assessments, developing the local Head Start T/TA Plan, identifying resources, and evaluating the training.

Riley, Mary T.; Flores, Alfredo; and Tucker, Janie. *PATHS: Providing Appropriate Training in Head Start: A Grantee Guide*. The Texas Tech Press, Lubbock, TX.

This manual begins by defining the universe of Head Start trainees and then offers guidelines for designing and providing training for each target audience. It includes information on using program and staff assessments to determine training needs and explains how to develop a training plan. Specific suggestions on how to design training for rural, mid-size, and metro area programs are included.

IMPLEMENTING STAFF TRAINING

Davis, Larry N. *Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Workshops*. Learning Concepts, 2501 N. Lamar, Austin TX 78705. 1974. $12.95-includes manual and "workshop staff packet."

This book is practical aid for part-time adult educators new to the field, as well as those whose training is in adult education. The book includes suggestions, forms, examples, and most importantly, rationale for planning workshops for adults. Topics covered include: needs assessment, writing competency-based learning objectives, selecting resources, designing learning methods, budgeting, making arrangements, and evaluating training. It includes a bibliography as well as a special section for administrators about staff development.

Exchange Press, Inc. *Beginnings*. Beginnings, P.O. Box 2890, Redmond, WA 98052. $20.00 for a four-issue annual subscription.

This magazine for teachers of young children focuses on the learning environment, combining current research and proven methods. A different topic is explored indepth each issue—a collection of viewpoints, resources, experiences, and ideas.

Orientation Packet for Head Start Staff, Parents, and Volunteers. Child Development Training Program, Department of Child Development, Iowa State University, Ames, IA. 1983.

This packet is a comprehensive resource of materials to introduce the reader to Head Start's way of working with young children and their families. Chapters include articles, booklets, tip sheets, checklists, and other materials about teaching and interacting with children and adults.

Training, the Magazine of Human Resource Development. Lakewood Publications, 731 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, MN 55403. (800) 328-4329. $36.00/year; $54.00/2 years, $63.00/3 years.

This monthly publication covers presentation skills, motivational techniques, developing trends, technological advances, and available resources to help trainers be more productive.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *A Guide for Operating a Home-Based Child Development Program*, "Chapter 6: Training." Washington, DC: GPO (DHHS Publication No. (OHDS) 85-31080), 1985. For copies, contact: Publications, The Head Start Bureau, P.O. Box 1182, Washington, DC 20013. Free

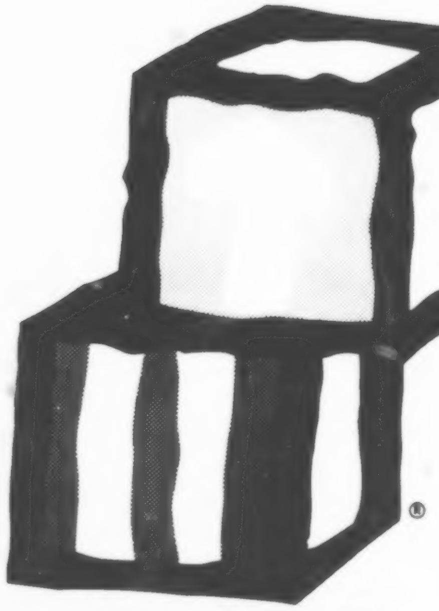
This chapter serves as a guide for providing staff and parent training in the home-based option.

IMPLEMENTING TRAINING FOR PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS

Copeland, Margaret L. *How to Design and Implement a Substitute Teacher Training Program for Head Start Parents.* Rider College, Box 6400, Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.

This book gives the reader some guidelines on how to develop and implement a substitute teacher program for Head Start parents. It gives a step-by-step procedure that includes a program needs assessment, a sales campaign, a 60-hour training program, substitute employment procedures, and more.

VIII. Evaluating the Education Component



VIII. EVALUATING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

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THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR FOR EVALUATION

- Encouraging staff to maintain a cooperative and positive attitude regarding the annual self-assessment.
- Providing a staff orientation on the self-assessment process.
- Meeting with the self-assessment team to provide information and answer questions.
- Chairing the self-assessment team for the Education Component or serving as a member.
- Reviewing the self-assessment results and developing appropriate improvement plans.
- Monitoring the implementation of improvement plans.
- Incorporating improvement plans in the annual update of the Education Component Plan.
- Designing and conducting local program evaluations.
- Using the results of the local program evaluation to promote the program or to make improvements.

BEFORE READING THIS CHAPTER

- Complete the self-assessment for this chapter.
- Read the Education Component section of the program's most recent self-assessment report.
- Meet with the Director to discuss how the self-assessment is conducted and how the results are used.
- Meet with other component coordinators to discuss local program evaluation efforts.
- Review the design and results of previous local evaluations conducted by the Education Component.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: EVALUATING THE EDUCATION COMPONENT

	Yes	Needs My Attention
ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT		
1. Have I provided self-assessment training for my staff?	____	____
2. Do I provide the self-assessment team with all the information they need?	____	____
3. When the self-assessment identifies problems, do I work with staff and parents to address them as soon as possible?	____	____
LOCAL PROGRAM EVALUATIONS		
4. Do I conduct local program evaluations in addition to the annual self-assessment?	____	____
5. Are the Education Component questionnaires written effectively:		
a. Do they use specific language?	____	____
b. Do they use open-ended questions?	____	____
c. Do they ask one question at a time?	____	____
d. Do they use familiar terms?	____	____
e. Do they avoid questions that begin with "Why"?	____	____
f. Do they ask for suggestions?	____	____
g. Do we test the questionnaire before using it?	____	____
6. Do I decide what to evaluate before collecting information?	____	____
7. Do I review existing records before seeking additional information?	____	____
8. Do I include staff and parents in program evaluation?	____	____
9. Do I make use of program evaluation results?	____	____
10. When changes are necessary, do I:		
a. make them one or two at a time?	____	____
b. include staff and parents in the process?	____	____
c. assess the impact of changes?	____	____
d. implement changes gradually?	____	____
e. provide support and training?	____	____

Review your responses, especially those you marked "Needs My Attention," and circle those topics you want to work on. List them below in order of importance to you.

____

____

____

THE ANNUAL SELF-ASSESSMENT

In keeping with Head Start's participatory management philosophy, each program conducts its own annual self-assessment of how successfully it has complied with the Head Start Performance Standards. This assessment is the operating responsibility of the Policy Council/Committee of each grantee or delegate agency. The annual self-assessment is required; it provides the local program with valuable information about the quality and impact of its services.

Typically, the Policy Council/Committee enlists the assistance of staff, parents, and representatives from the community in conducting the self-assessment. These volunteers are organized into teams to examine the plans and operations of each component. Training is provided by program staff or consultants regarding the content of the Performance Standards and the process used to conduct the self-assessment. Activities, facilities, or plans that are found to be out of compliance or in need of improvement are addressed in a self-assessment report.

"SAVI" is an acronym for self-assessment/validation instrument, a document based on the Performance Standards that is often used by programs to conduct and document the self-assessment. Organized by component, the SAVI includes each applicable policy, a cross-reference to the Performance Standards, guidance and suggestions for determining compliance, and a place to indicate whether or not the Head Start program is in compliance with each item. Program use of the SAVI *is not required*. Programs may use any instrument or process to conduct the self-assessment as long as the Policy Council/Committee maintains operating responsibility.

Once the self-assessment is completed, a plan is developed to address problems that relate to each component. In some cases, the problem can and should be addressed immediately; an example of this would be recharging a fire extinguisher. Other problems will require a more detailed review before an improvement plan can be implemented. For example, if the self-assessment team finds the Education Component out of compliance with regard to sex-role stereotyping, the improvement planning might include further examination of the curriculum, teacher attitudes and behaviors, and books and other classroom materials, as well as observation of how the children are encouraged or discouraged with regard to sex-role stereotyping. The results of this review will then be used to devise a plan to bring the component into compliance. The plan might suggest actions such as purchasing new materials, providing training for staff and parents, revising the curriculum, or introducing other techniques and activities.

As with other activities in Head Start, a participatory approach to problem solving is recommended. Staff, advisory committees, and parents work together to complete and implement improvement plans.

Head Start grantees are funded on a yearly cycle. Before the program's yearly grant application is approved, the Program Specialist in the regional office responsible for the program validates the self-assessment and reviews improvement plans and other program documents, including the grant application and budget. If the program is in compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards and no other problems exist, the grant application is approved and funding continues.

HOW THE EDUCATION SELF-ASSESSMENT TEAM CONDUCTS THE SELF-ASSESSMENT[1]

The team of staff, parents, and community representatives who review the Education Component are usually trained to use three assessment techniques: **observation, interviews, and review of written records and documentation**. Specific assessment responsibilities are assigned to team members so that the work can be completed within the established time. Self-assessment team members also need to coordinate their findings with teams examining related components.

OBSERVATIONS

Classroom observations are the most time-consuming activity. It is advisable for the Education Coordinator to meet with the team before the classroom observations take place so that team members understand the overall philosophy, goals, and objectives of the component. Ideally, each classroom will be visited, with a pair of observers arriving before the children and staying for the entire session. If possible, each pair of observers should include one person who has had some experience in making classroom observations. Also, it is strongly suggested that parents do not observe in their own child's classroom. It is very difficult for the parent to be objective and their child's presence in the classroom may be too distracting. Observations are confidential; they are shared only with members of the self-assessment team.

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[1] Adapted from *Head Start Self-Assessment Guidance* (Seattle, WA: Region X, ACYF, 1979) pp. 22-31.

Observations should take place on a typical day, rather than when a special event is to take place, such as a party or a field trip. Also, observers should try to keep to their task rather than interacting with the children, because such interaction can change the climate or activities in the classroom. Teachers can explain to the children ahead of time why the visitors are there.

Observers look for examples of how the children are encouraged in their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. They also take note of the kinds of activities occurring, scheduling, materials available, and the physical environment. Throughout the visit, observers will be watching the interactions in the classroom—children with adults, children with children, and adults with adults.

The observation day also includes an inspection of the facility, including hallways, bathrooms, playground, etc. Observers will be looking for potential health and/or safety hazards and evidence of licensing as well as assessing the overall atmosphere of the center.

Members of the education assessment team also observe several home visits. If the program has a home-based option, then observation of a larger sample of home visits is needed. Parents should be asked in advance to grant permission for the team to visit their homes. The focus of these observations is on how the parent and home visitor work together to set goals for the child and on the training provided to the parent by the home visitor.

INTERVIEWS

Classroom and home observations are not the only self-assessment techniques. Team members also will need to interview the Education Component staff and the Education Coordinator to clarify observations and to find out more about nonobservable parts of the Education Component. Interview questions are used to determine compliance with the Head Start Performance Standards.

Parent interviews also provide valuable information about program operations. These can include one-to-one interviews with classroom volunteers and group interviews with parents at center meetings or Policy Council/Committee sessions. Responsibility for this task may be shared with the team assessing the Parent Involvement Component.

REVIEW OF WRITTEN MATERIALS

Review of written materials begins with a careful reading of the Education Component Plan to determine compliance with the requirements of the Performance Standards and to get a full picture of all aspects of the Education Component. Other records reviewed include the following.

- **A sample of weekly lesson plans.** These can be reviewed either before or after classroom observation to determine compliance with Performance Standards, to see if the day's activities follow the plan, to determine if plans indicate individualization for individuals and small groups of children, and to assess how well they conform to the curriculum.

- **Files on individual children.** Due to confidentiality rules, parent assessors can only look at their own child's file. Other reviewers check a sample of files looking for documentation that individualized activities are being planned, implemented, and evaluated.

- **Home visit reports.** For both center and home-based options, a review of home visit reports will show how parents have been involved in planning their child's educational program and if they have received adequate training in how to provide home activities for their child.

- **Staff and parent training plans, agendas, and evaluations.** These are reviewed to make sure that training required by the Performance Standards has taken place or is scheduled.

- **Other records and documents.** Local licenses, inspection reports, classroom committee minutes, inventory lists, and other documents are reviewed, depending on local program requirements.

THE EDUCATION COORDINATOR'S ROLE IN THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Education Coordinator assumes several roles in the self-assessment process. These include encouraging staff to be positive and cooperative, conducting staff training on the self-assessment, providing information to the review team or serving as a member, and completing follow-up activities.

ENCOURAGING POSITIVE ATTITUDES

As the leader of the Education Component, the Education Coordinator's attitude toward the self-assessment is extremely important. If the Education Coordinator sees this task as a cumbersome and nonproductive process, then this will be conveyed to staff and parents. However, if the Education Coordinator recognizes that the self-assessment is an essential element of the Head Start planning and evaluation cycle, staff and parents will also develop positive attitudes. The Education Coordinator should convey to staff and parents the value of the self-assessment in maintaining and improving the overall quality of services provided by the component.

One of the key benefits derived from participating as a member of the self-assessment team is a greater understanding of the total Head Start program. Parents who have been active classroom volunteers are an excellent choice to assess the Education Component. Until they go through the process of looking at how the Education Component implements the Head Start Performance Standards, they may not realize that there is a purpose for everything that goes on in the classroom.

PREPARING STAFF FOR THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

Staff should receive training on the self-assessment process and on the techniques that the self-assessment team will be using. Three areas must be discussed.

- **Classroom observations.** The self-assessment team will make their observations as unobtrusively as possible. Classroom staff will behave as if there were no visitors, but they will be available to answer questions once the observation has been completed, and after the children have gone home. Reviewers will also be checking the facilities and equipment.
- **Staff interviews.** Staff should be helpful and open rather than defensive about their performance. Encourage them to provide honest answers to the questions asked. Often the self-assessment interviewers are trained to ask open-ended questions, beginning with "How do you . . . ?" rather than "Do you . . . ?"
- **Review of written materials.** The staff needs to be aware of confidentiality regulations. Parents and volunteers are only allowed to look at their own child's records. Other staff can review children's records on a need-to-know basis. Education Component records that are generally available for review include:
  - the Education Component Plan,
  - minutes from meetings,
  - training plans and agendas,
  - job descriptions,
  - training evaluations,
  - lesson plans,
  - daily schedules, and
  - home visit reports.

MEETING WITH THE SELF-ASSESSMENT TEAM

The Education Coordinator will also meet with the self-assessment team responsible for reviewing the Education Component. This meeting provides an opportunity to explain the philosophy, goals, and objectives of the component and any terms that may be unfamiliar to someone who doesn't work regularly in a Head Start classroom.

In some programs, the Education Coordinator is asked by the Policy Council/Committee to either serve on the self-assessment team for the Education Component or chair it. Other programs use an existing education advisory committee to conduct the self-assessment of the Education Component.

AFTER THE ASSESSMENT IS OVER

When the self-assessment is complete, the assessment team will prepare a report about noncompliance items and areas in need of improvement. It's a rare Education Component that is doing everything as well as it possibly can. Often the team will also identify compliance and improvement objectives and suggest strategies for improvement. All of this information will be used by the Education Component work group (staff, parents, advisory committee, etc.) to prepare plans for the component, as discussed in Chapter III. Improvement plans will also be incorporated into the annual review and update of the Education Component Plan.

In some programs, the self-assessment culminates in an exit interview with the assessment team, the Director, and other staff and parents in attendance. This meeting provides an opportunity for the assessment team to offer first-hand comments and suggestions for improving the program. It may be difficult to hear about problems within the Education Component, especially when staff have been working hard to provide a quality program. However, important lessons often are learned from the objective reviewers, who can see the program's strengths and needs more clearly than those who work in the program each day.

One final step in the self-assessment process is to share the results with staff. Then congratulate them for their cooperation and continuing efforts to provide quality services to children and families.

LOCAL PROGRAM EVALUATION EFFORTS

In addition to the annual self-assessment, many Head Start programs design and implement other evaluation efforts. Program evaluation activities serve a variety of purposes within the program.

- They describe, assess, and report on what the program has or has not accomplished.
- They enable the Education Coordinator to answer questions about the program's effectiveness and efficient operation.
- They provide concrete evidence to staff, parents, and others of how well the component is doing.
- They result in information that can be used to plan improvements or changes in the program.
- They help the Education Coordinator and staff make decisions about changes in the program's direction or focus.

Without some kind of program evaluation, it is difficult to pinpoint the results of the combined efforts of Education Component staff and volunteers. Although the annual self-assessment provides the Education Component with some objective information about compliance and progress, other regular program evaluation activities are needed so that there is an ongoing source of data concerning the program's successes.

PROCESS AND OUTCOME EVALUATIONS

These two terms are not as complicated as they may sound. **Process evaluations** look at **how** a program is implemented and examine compliance, or solicit reactions and suggestions. The annual Head Start self-assessment is a process evaluation. Other examples are staff and parent questionnaires, logs of parent comments, interviews with parents, or end-of-the-year meetings. Process evaluations elicit likes and dislikes, reactions to specific activities, and/or suggestions for changes.

Outcome evaluations are concerned with **what** the program has accomplished. These evaluations gather information that can be used to measure changes in attitude, knowledge, or practices. The long-term studies of how the Head Start experience has affected children are examples of outcome evaluations, as are evaluations of how teachers apply training experiences to classroom activities.

COLLECTING EVALUATION INFORMATION

Questionnaires often are used to collect the information needed to conduct a process evaluation. These may be the basis for group discussions, one-to-one interviews, or surveys to be completed at home by parents or staff members. Writing questionnaires effectively is not difficult, but there are several points to keep in mind.

- **Use very specific language.** When asking for an opinion, use words that convey that meaning. For example, "What do you like about . . . ?"
- **Use open-ended questions** as much as possible. Avoid using questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no." Instead of asking, "Was the home visit useful?" ask, "What did you find useful about the home visit?"
- **Ask questions one at a time** so that they can be answered one at a time. When multiple questions are asked, it is impossible to determine which question was answered. For example, asking "Was your child's teacher well-organized, open to suggestions, and a good communicator?" will cause confusion. This multiple question can be broken down into three separate questions, if answers to all three are desired.
- **Use terms that are familiar**, avoiding jargon or technical language. New parents may not be familiar with Head Start's acronyms and terminology.
- **Avoid questions that begin with "why."** There are usually so many possible responses that the answers aren't meaningful.
- **Ask questions that solicit suggestions.** Questions such as, "What issues about children would you like to discuss in our parent training sessions this year?" give parents the opportunity to provide suggestions.
- **Test the questionnaire** with a sample of parents and staff, then revise it accordingly. This is an important

step because it is the only way to find out if the questions asked will elicit needed information.

If the questionnaire will be distributed rather than used in a group or one-to-one setting, then clear written instructions are necessary. These can take the form of an introductory letter that also tells the respondents how and why the information is going to be used. Also, the letter should state that completing the questionnaire is voluntary and that names are not required.

PROGRAM EVALUATION TECHNIQUES

A first step in program evaluation is for the Education Coordinator and staff to identify what needs to be evaluated. This might be an area in which there have been complaints, one identified through a records review, a new activity, one the Education Coordinator is thinking about changing, or one that hasn't been looked at in a long time.

The second step is to determine what information is needed to conduct the evaluation, and whether or not it already exists in the Education Component's records or those of another component. Records such as volunteer reports, parent training attendance sheets, agendas and evaluations, minutes, and home visit reports should be reviewed to see if they contain the information needed. For example, an Education Coordinator may want to find out if parents are satisfied with the activities offered by the component. If the records document when participation occurred and how many parents attended, but don't provide the information needed to determine satisfaction, techniques that could be used are a survey or questionnaire sent home with the children, individual interviews with a sample of parents, or a group discussion at a parent meeting. Sample parent evaluations for center-based and home-based options are included in the *Resource Papers* (VIII-1-8).

Program evaluation information is gathered from staff through the Education Coordinator's ongoing interactions, through questionnaires or surveys, and through discussions at staff meetings. Staff can provide evaluative information based on their actual experiences in the classroom and their work with parents.

Staff may be asked to evaluate individual component activities, provide an end-of-the-year review, or assess the effectiveness of the support and guidance provided by the Education Coordinator. A sample staff evaluation form is included in the *Resource Papers* (VIII-9-13).

The overall purpose of evaluation efforts is to find out if the activities of the Education Component are successful. In addition to the questionnaires for staff and parents, there are many other ways to find the answer to this question—use the ones that seem most appropriate. Some suggested evaluation opportunities include the following.

- Become a sensitive and observant Education Coordinator who is aware of what's going on in the centers and homes; solicit daily feedback on how the program is doing and where efforts need to be supported. Document this feedback in a diary or journal and use it periodically to evaluate progress.
- Regularly include time during staff meetings to discuss progress and evaluate the results of ongoing activities. Take advantage of these occasions when the entire staff is available to provide information and suggestions.
- Use observations to evaluate how effective the Education Component is in meeting a specific program objective. For example, to evaluate the integration of language development techniques into all parts of the program, observe staff interactions with parents and children, review lesson plans and home-visit reports, and assess the effectiveness of the environment. (Conducting classroom observations is discussed in more detail in Chapter VI.)
- Set up a parent lounge with a suggestion box or a notebook for parents to write down their concerns, gripes, suggestions, or praise. Read these comments regularly and respond accordingly.
- Invite parents to an evaluation meeting where everyone has a chance to speak. Parents often feel more comfortable making comments when they feel they have the support of their peers.
- Maintain an ongoing log of parent comments with the staff. Periodically review and analyze the comments to determine if any single activity or service has been mentioned repeatedly.
- Hold a mid- or end-of-year retreat for staff and parents. Use this opportunity to look objectively at the component. Then develop plans to be implemented on returning to the center.
- Ask parents or staff to prepare a wish list of things they would change about the program, materials for the classroom and home visits, training topics, an ideal day, or what they'd like to get from their supervisor. They can do this individually or in a group brainstorming session.

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- Ask other components for feedback about how well collaboration efforts are succeeding.
- Ask staff and parents to complete an evaluation of the performance of the Education Coordinator.
- Conduct regular self-evaluations to determine personal progress toward meeting goals and objectives.
- Set up a system for teachers to visit each other's classrooms. Peer evaluations may be viewed more positively than supervisor evaluations.

EVALUATION OF PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

This type of evaluation is used to assess what the program has accomplished. Year-end assessments of a representative sample of children are often used to determine if the children as a group have progressed in the various developmental areas as planned. They can answer questions, such as, Have language skills improved? Are children more independent? Have their attention spans increased? Program planners review the assessment results and the ongoing observations of staff and parents. Progress or lack of progress in the developmental areas helps the staff to determine whether the program is effective as designed and implemented. Failure to achieve program goals indicates the need to assess the curriculum, staff performance, and the learning environment.

STEPS IN EVALUATING PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS

Program evaluations are usually conducted every two or three years. The assessment instrument or combination of instruments used must be in line with program goals and relevant to the population served. This means that the items in the instrument match the goals of the program and therefore will collect data on behavior, skills, and knowledge that the program is designed to impact. If the population served is Spanish speaking, the instrument must be one that is available in Spanish. (See Chapter IV, the section on "Individualizing the Program" for a discussion of assessment.)

Once the instrument is selected, a representative sample of children is identified (approximately 50 percent in a small program and 25 percent in a large program). The children are given a pre-test at the beginning of the year and a post-test at the end using the same instrument. It may be a good idea to have an independent assessment team conduct the program evaluation—someone from outside the program who may be more objective. At a minimum, those who administer the test should receive some training.

The results of the assessment are analyzed for statistical and programmatic significance. For example, in a program with a small number of children, changes between the pre-test and post-test may not be statistically significant but could still be programmatically significant.

USING EVALUATION RESULTS

One final but important point about program evaluation is that the results should be used by the staff, parents, and the Education Coordinator to upgrade program quality and to promote the program. Evaluation is not complete until the results have been tallied, analyzed, discussed, and then plugged back into the planning process. Program evaluation results can also be used to:

- inform other local service agencies about the progress and impact of Head Start;
- prepare brochures, slide tapes, recruitment flyers, fact sheets, public service announcements, or any other kinds of promotional materials;
- determine the need for training; if the Education Coordinator observes that many teachers are writing incomplete lesson plans, then training sessions can be scheduled to address this;
- use actual parent comments as a part of the introduction to enhance the component plan or other requests for funding; they will make the request come alive;
- make changes in the component plan;
- make changes in the curriculum;
- develop or adapt specific activities for the classroom, training sessions, parent education, etc.;
- acknowledge success at awards dinners, in the newsletter, on the center bulletin board, at the Policy Council/Committee meetings, etc.; and
- prepare a final report on the year's activities.

OBTAINING SUPPORT FOR MAKING CHANGES

Decisions to make changes in the program sometimes result in opposition from some staff, parents, or the Director. If the evaluation information documents the need for these changes, they will be easier to sell. Other suggestions for encouraging support for changes include the following.

- Make one or two changes at a time; don't reject the entire program.
- Establish a committee of parents and staff to help implement any changes.
- Periodically assess the effect of the changes. Maybe the new approach isn't as effective as it was thought to be.
- Involve staff and parents in planning *how* the changes can be implemented.
- Be patient. Resist the temptation to hurry things along. Changes are easier to accept when they occur gradually.
- Whenever possible, use staff or parents' identification of problem areas as a guide for initiating change.
- Provide the necessary support and training.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFUL EVALUATION

- Coordinate the Education Component's evaluation efforts with those of other components so that parents are not asked to complete multiple questionnaires.
- Try not to overreact to individual negative or positive comments. Seek comments from a larger sample of parents and staff instead.
- Conduct periodic, objective evaluations rather than just relying on gut feelings about how the component is doing.
- Include staff and parents in the design and implementation of evaluation efforts.
- Use the results of process and outcome evaluations in future planning for the Education Component.
- Encourage staff to maintain a positive and cooperative attitude during the annual self-assessment.

RESOURCES

Head Start Self-Assessment Guidance. Region X, ACYF, Third and Broad Building, 2901 Third Avenue, Seattle, WA. 1979. Contact the regional office for availability.

This manual was developed to provide Head Start programs with guidance on how to actually conduct the self-assessment. It includes information on selecting and training assessment team members, gathering data, developing the report, and conducting the evaluation.

Morris, Lynn Lyons, and Fitz-Gibbon, Carol Taylor. *Program Evaluation Kit*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

This kit contains eight books written to guide and assist individuals in planning and managing evaluations. These practical, field-tested, step-by-step guides all offer detailed advice, supported by clear definitions and useful procedures explained in nontechnical language. The volumes can be purchased individually or as a complete set.

Taylor, Mary. *SAVI: Do It!* Salem, UT: Kandor House Publications, Inc., 1984.

This revised manual outlines a field-tested system for parents to use in conducting the annual self-assessment of the program. The manual includes instructions, training agendas, and all the necessary forms for conducting the self-assessment and writing the actual report.

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DHHS Publication No. (OHDS) 86-31536